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SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS, P.R.A.
1768-1792.
From a Picture by Himself.

THE ENGLISH ILLUSTRATED MAGAZINE.

EIGHT PRESIDENTS OF THE ROYAL ACADEMY.

By FREDERICK WEDMORE.

DIFFICULT as it may be to be accurately prophetic in regard to posterity's verdicts, it is safe to say that the best work of Sir John Millais will live with the best work of Constable and Turner, of Gainsborough and of Wilson, of Hogarth and of Etty—will take its place, that is, in the front rank of English painting; and so we come to add one more great artist to the scanty two or three of the eight painters one or other of whom, from 1768 to the month in which this article appears, has presided over the English Royal Academy of Arts. And who, one asks, may be those two or three? Leighton—"our admirable Leighton," in the cordial and veracious word of his successor—Leighton is probably one of them. Sir Joshua, quite certainly, is another. And who may be a third? No one, it is to be feared, of whom a single living man can have a vivid recollection. For we must, in any case, go back so very far—we must go back at least some seventy years—in order to find him. It is not Sir Francis Grant, is it?—courteous and charming gentleman, sound and straightforward painter, as Sir Francis was. It is not Sir Charles Eastlake. Just as conclusively it is not, and it cannot be, Sir Martin Archer Shee, the worthy person on whom the chair devolved during the year that first saw William IV. upon the throne. Who, then, remains behind? Sir Thomas Lawrence, President for ten preceding years. He alone is in the running, but I cannot entertain any real hope that he will come up early to the winning-post. There is a temporary reaction in his favour just now. The English dealer looks with respect upon his effort, and the French connoisseur, with a wish to be extremely up-to-date, insists on talking much about him. The only President I have not named thus far is the blameless Quaker President—Benjamin West—as to whom, when he was still a youth, the "elders" of his particular "meeting" sat solemnly in conclave to debate whether he should or should not be permitted to address himself to canvas and the palette. The "elders" took a liberal view as well as a kindly one, and Benjamin was suffered to paint. He painted with immense success—for Fame that goes, and Money that goes also—but for immortality he did not paint. See, then, how few among our eight Presidents of the Academy have been producers of the art that lasts!

It is almost a thankless business, the going back among the records of mediocrity—the careful appraisement of that which in its day was serviceable, but whose use has long been fulfilled. Still, as one surveys the list of Presidents, one feels that if hardly two or three of them appeal to one to-day with any approach to irresistible force, there is this interest at least attaching to each one of them—that each one of them, almost, represents with something of accuracy the taste of his time. And if that anywhere fails to be quite true, it is with the immortals only that it fails. The taste of the time in which they first appear is not always pleased with the immortals. But the rest—the rest would never have been Presidents at all if they had not represented the fashion of their day. Imagine Sir Martin Shee President this morning; fancy Sir Charles Eastlake at this moment at the head of the profession whose one adoration is for force—whose one cry is for "values"! That artist, so

mildly elegant, so unobtrusively tame! Yet he had his day, and he was honoured in it.

With this last consideration there is connected, too, the question whether a great President of the Academy is bound to be a great painter. Most certainly he is not bound to be a painter in a great style. He is not bound to be an artist whose claim to the Ideal consists, in chief, in plentiful lack of the appreciation of the Real. It is enough if he paints something greatly, whether the something be Olympian gods or a dish of fruit and the reflections in a glass of water. But is he bound—it may even be urged further—to paint greatly at all? And even if, in some measure, it may fairly be asked of him that he shall represent in some degree the taste of his time, may there not, in the question of fitness for a Presidency, be the yet more important demand, "Is the man a great gentleman, an artist, not, perhaps, of extraordinary achievement, but of comprehensive view; the master, not, perhaps, of his particular craft, but yet a leader of men, just and conciliatory, with manner bland yet decisive?" And we may be sure that the secret of certain past elections to the Presidency—elections which have made hard judges, narrow experts, wonder—is to be found in the answer to that question. And more and more as time proceeds will the issue be complicated—and I think

SIR THOMAS LAWRENCE.
1820-1830.

quite fairly complicated—by such a consideration as this one: "In the world of Society, will the man do?" For he has to do there, just as much as in the world of the studio.

Scarcely until the advent of Sir John Millais himself to the highest of artistic dignities, has the office of President been

BENJAMIN WEST.
1792-1820.
From a Portrait by Sir Thomas Lawrence.

held by anyone of first-rate originality. Nor is this a remarkable circumstance, for official recognition of any kind is proffered but slowly and unwillingly to those whose way is ever their own. The biggest President thus far—a man whose work the approval of four generations, with different aims, has consecrated—was not himself conspicuously original. Scarcely was he original with the originality of Crome or Gainsborough — never at all with the originality of Hogarth, Watteau, Chardin, Quentin de Latour. Sir Joshua's greatness lies less in his originality than in his comprehensiveness — his comprehensiveness first as an artist, who could paint "Cupid as a Link-boy," and Kitty Fisher, dark, sparkling, prettily wanton, and Esther Jacobs, homely and restful, poetic, delicately blonde, and then again, Lady Carlyle in stately meditation; the ready sprightliness of Mrs. Abington, in a comedy of Congreve's; Mrs. Siddons, with a mind to "stab" anything—yes, even the potatoes—Baretti, subtle yet direct; and Admiral Keppel; and "Hope Nursing Love" (the portrait of the exquisite Miss Morris, half reclining, with bared breast); and this or that child, with all the waywardness of infancy and its inconsequence; and the landscape of Richmond Hill. And next, of course, we take into account Sir Joshua's comprehensiveness as a man: an urbane man of affairs;

MRS. SIDDONS AS THE TRAGIC MUSE.

From the Picture by Sir Joshua Reynolds in the Dulwich Gallery.

CHILD WITH FLOWERS.
By Sir Thomas Lawrence.

a man of society; the associate of Burke; a man not displeased at all times with the modest companionship of Miss Reynolds, his sister, who kept his house for him in Leicester Square; a man who, as indulgent as Johnson to the *demi-monde*, and better, perhaps, acquainted with it, gathered himself together for close reflection and sagacious comment on the art he practised, and so addressed to the assembled students of the Royal Academy lectures which teach us to this day many truths, and some untruths, about painters, and which are a lesson in grave and dignified and stately English style.

But if in some of the foregoing words I may seem to have disparaged or denied Sir Joshua's originality, do not let it be thought that I would deny at all or would disparage his greatness. His greatness — outside the important matter of his range, which has been spoken of already—lay in the enormous difference which his practice all at once established between the work that was his own and that of any of his English predecessors, Hogarth alone excepted. The technique of the art—and more

THOMAS MOORE.
By Sir Martin Archer Shee.

than its technique, the conceptions it expressed — went up by leaps when Reynolds put his brush to canvas. Not that I would seek to undervalue the one great portrait-painter practising in England a hundred years before him. Art will always owe something to Sir Peter

SIR MARTIN ARCHER SHEE.
1830-1850.
From a Drawing by J. Jackson, A.R.A.

Lely's unremitting record of fleshly and familiar grace; but, save for Hogarth, between Lely's time and Reynolds's, who was there in English Portrait-Painting whose work must live? And as for Sir Joshua's more immediate forerunners, what stiffness and what mannerism, what poverty of pictorial conception, was generally theirs!

Reynolds was a wonderful colourist in warm tones: a richer, not a more delicate, colourist than Gainsborough: a more harmonious and subtler colourist than Romney. His, in a sense, and in a measure, was a Venetian palette: not Venetian, indeed, with quite the flexibility of Watteau, yet recalling the Venetian paintings far more than those of any other school. And, turning to another quality, his composition was so fine that it appears inevitable: so good is it that unless you are well on the look-out, you do not notice it at all: there is nothing obvious about it. Something of this he had learned, no doubt, from the now decried and the then popular masters of Bologna and Parma. And then, his grasp of character! It excels that of any Venetian, except, it may be, Moroni: it excels yet more anything in the works of those painters of mid-Italy to whose virtues Sir Joshua, in his discourses, pays willing tribute. They were devoted to the abstract and the general. Sir Joshua was devoted

to the individual—not, of course, with quite the penetrating glance of a Velasquez or a Rembrandt; yet still devoted; for certainly he was, of the individual, an adequate exponent.

For eight-and-twenty years—four years longer than his illustrious predecessor—Benjamin West sat in the chair of the Academy. If he had not the fire of a great artist, he had the taste and love of Art of the artistic person, and the discretion of the Quaker; he was a courtier of the best and worthiest type. His tenure of the Presidency—a post nominally not given for life, but one as to which there is made each year at least some show of formal choice—his tenure of the Presidency was once, at least, seriously, if not effectively, disputed. Fortunate is it for the memory of West that the official distinction was at least his; for, to speak plainly, it is only by his having been the recipient of it that we have cause to recollect even any portion of his work. And to say that is not to be so severe as it at first seems. His art was essentially of a period: its particular conventionality and its particular artificiality are distasteful to us to-day. But it is no reproach

NAPOLEON ON BOARD THE "BELLEROPHON."
From the Picture painted by Sir Charles Eastlake in 1815, now the property of the Marquis of Lansdowne.

to him to say that West was useful and acceptable in his own generation. The conception of pictorial art then generally entertained, found itself sufficiently embodied in the conscientious productions of this good soul, who loved his kind—and sincerely loved painting.

David Wilkie—who was a genre painter often close to Nature, where West had

SIR CHARLES LOCKE EASTLAKE.
1850-1865.
From a Drawing by T. Bridgeford.

been an historical painter, far enough from vivid History—might almost have been West's successor, as afterwards he might have been Shee's. But it is upon Sir Thomas Lawrence that, in 1820, "the election lights." His vogue as a portrait-painter was at that moment untouched by the vogue of another. Not for him any such rivalry as had had to be encountered by the great Sir Joshua, who, fashionable as he was through all his life, yet found himself at one time in competition with Gainsborough, and at another in competition with George Romney. Lawrence, from his earliest manhood, had enjoyed the suffrages of the town. Not wholly without character as a recorder of men, he put down plainly on his canvas the seductiveness of women. One element of their seductiveness at least he heightened. But he chronicled scarcely at all their intellectual power—scarcely arrested for a moment on his canvas their spiritual grace. His fair women, though observant of the proprieties, are carnal rather than divine: luscious rather than witty. Before long, the inconstant admirer tires of their charm. Here and there, of course, is an exception. The Stage, on which Genius finds so happy a manifestation, and by which Genius is itself so happily inspired, gave a certain stimulus even to Sir Thomas

THE ESCAPE OF THE CARRARA FAMILY FROM THE PURSUIT OF THE DUKE OF MILAN, 1389.
From the Picture by Sir Charles Eastlake in the National Gallery.

Lawrence, charged as he was with his material prose and his cheap and showy poetry. In vivacity and fascination, in

SIR FRANCIS GRANT.
1866-1878.

the beauty of life, his portrait of Miss Farren leaves nothing to be asked for. For a moment at least that bewitching comedian must have affected him almost as Lady Hamilton affected Romney. Delighting so entirely his eye and heart, she gave—doubtless she gave—strength and refinement to his hand.

Shee, as was fitting, had long been an Academician, when, by the votes of his brethren, he was in 1830 motioned to the chair. Only the curious inquirer into past greatness can be invited to address himself to any study of his work. Now, at least, after the death of Lawrence, who, however great were his deficiencies, was a considerable artist, we find ourselves among a little sequence, so to say, of Presidents whom it is dullness to study. Yet, as for Shee himself, he was a man of brilliancy, though never a great painter. His "Thomas Moore" has vivacity, and is what is called "speaking." It is observant, certainly, and adroit.

Sir Charles Eastlake sat in the chair after Sir Martin Shee, and sat there not without reason, for he had social charm and judgment and fine taste; and so, in several ways, the country is his debtor. But Eastlake's art displayed, in the main, not only conventions, which are inevitable, but conventionality, which we resent. Who can say of Sir Charles Eastlake that his outlook on the world, though sincere and conscientious, was wholly his own? With these lines there will be printed an illustration—it is a picture from the National Gallery—in which that conventionality is revealed. See the actual picture, in which the faults are even more evident than in the reproduction, and there must be noticed, rather painfully, the thin and tepid, though clean, colouring, and, again, the artificial arrangement of the light and shade—the high lights concentrated on the faces, and so much of the figures in a shadow impenetrable and ridiculous. But in a portrait of Napoleon, the artist—a younger man when he accomplished it—is displayed better. In more "important" compositions he was wont to be preoccupied with an interest that is almost literary—or, he was sentimental rather than pictorial. Yet he had some gift of genuine tenderness—a painter's or a writer's equivalent for the actor's *don des larmes*.

Of Sir Charles Eastlake's immediate successor, Sir Francis Grant, I must be pardoned for saying only that he was at least a characteristic Englishman, manly and shrewd, distinguished of bearing,

LORD JOHN RUSSELL.
By Sir Francis Grant.

QUEEN CHARLOTTE AT THE AGE OF THIRTY-SIX, WITH HER THIRTEEN CHILDREN.
From the Picture by Benjamin West at Hampton Court.

observant, in a prosaic fashion, of the points in man or horse. At home at Ascot, at home at Melton Mowbray, in Paris scarcely in his element, at Florence quite *dépaysé*.

So lately have there been issued eloquent and comprehensive eulogies of Lord Leighton that I am loth to say anything which savours of the twice-told tale. But one thing this very circumstance, this recent death and all the tributes that came after it, allows me fortunately to take note of—the praise awarded to Lord Leighton when, "in streaming London's central roar," they left him to his rest, showed that the carping criticism of which he had received so much in his later years represented not at all the real feeling of the competent, in regard to his achievement and his place. That he was artificial, that he was manufactured, that he was scarcely an artist, that he was an artist out of date—we had been told that to satiety. It was the privilege of the ill-educated to mock at and to jeer at him. The rawest youth from Paris, with his little shibboleth, demolished the President to his complete satisfaction. But when Lord Leighton died, all the graver, fitly-equipped critics thought fit to remind the painter-youth, ingenuous and narrow, hot and prejudiced, that Leighton had great qualities, scarcely now grasped, scarcely now rightly valued—a master of pure draughtsmanship, a master

SIR JOHN EVERETT MILLAIS, BART.
Photo by Russell and Sons, Baker Street.

of line, a master of design, a master of composition. He had one fatal fault, no doubt, in many people's eyes: in the more finished of his labours, at least, he was smooth after a fashion that is gone—he lacked modern handling. But look, then,

LORD LEIGHTON.
1878-1896.
Photo by Russell and Sons, Baker Street.

at his sketches. His sketches in oil—so many of which his friend Mr. Wyke Bayliss, the President, was fortunate enough to secure, in two successive seasons, for the walls of the Royal British Artists—his sketches are direct in method, and august in colour. Lord Leighton was himself very indulgent, very forgiving, to the smart youth who paints. But for me, when I hear the smart youth holding forth, out of the riches of his wisdom, on the great President who is no more, I think of the author of the latest *vers de société* amiably patronising the author of "Comus," of the successful temporarily popular dabbler in stories of adventure kindly pronouncing on Fielding and on Smollett, or of the narrator of the chaste career of some Italian "light o' loves" thinking that with an easy word he puts aside the austere Dante—tramples down for his own private benefit the laurels of the Florentine. Not so quickly, however, do these great things pass.

And now there has succeeded, very rightly, to the chair of the departed idealist—to the chair of the poet who sought, full often, his inspiration in the methods of the Past—an immense realist, an artist who fails sometimes, as he so frequently succeeds; one who, whether failing or succeeding, is sincere and himself, always: a man with a rare hold upon the modern world; perfectly fearless in the

grappling with it—an interpreter of modern character, of its intensity, its nervous force. For Sir John Millais, at least in the more characteristic of his work, no old-world dreams, no drawing his inspiration from a Past with which—however much it may at times impress and interest him—the sincere modern cannot be in complete sympathy. Millais's painting mirrors the life of his own generation: not, of course, in the fashion of literary anecdote, but in the way of faithful and courageous portraiture. "All my poems," said Goethe, to the privileged Eckermann—the listener to the finest of the secrets of the greatest literary art—"all my poems are occasional poems." On a real experience they were founded—a real experience of some incident, some emotion, some interesting personality, had been the source and germ of them. Well! On no foundation less sure than that, there is established the practice and the fame of Millais.

HEAR THOU MY TALE.

Hear thou my tale: I went apart
One joyous spring, and chose my heart
A plot of ground, and built my cot,
And all my timorous cares forgot.

At noon I slept beneath the tree,
At eve I walk'd beside the sea;
Trees and life-giving herbs I had,
And every morning made me glad.

So I grew old and wise and gray,
And friends came round me where I lay,
And in my garden's scented breath
We sat at eve and talked of death.

And love and pleasure each had known,
And grief, both others' and their own;
We never wearied night and morn,
But we were glad we had been born.

'Tis thus the tide of life doth rise,
And ebbs away and leaves us wise.
O men, my brothers, when will ye
Like us live happy, wise, and free?

JOHN EGLINTON.

Photo by J. Thomson, Grosvenor Street, W.

DR. NANSEN, THE ARCTIC EXPLORER.

DR. NANSEN'S POLAR EXPEDITION.

By HERBERT WARD.

THE startling rumour, emanating from somewhat obscure Russian sources, to the effect that Dr. Nansen had successfully accomplished the object of his expedition and was now on his homeward passage, has served to intensify the general unflagging interest in Polar exploration. At this date the report is both meagre and lacking in the elements of conviction; and, indeed, as each successive day passes without bringing further news or confirmation, the chances of there being truth in the report grow relatively less. Notwithstanding the doubtful aspect of the news, it is impossible, however, to dispel a feeling of hopeful anticipation; for Dr. Nansen's remarkable personality and the boldness of his venture have combined to exercise a powerful charm upon us. While still in the condition of keen expectancy, hoping each day to receive news of the gallant little band of Norwegians who have been absent from communication for upwards of two years and a half, it is interesting to refer briefly to the subject of Arctic exploration and to the theories upon which Dr. Nansen based his plans. In the first place, the history of Polar exploration is a very long and a very tragic story; and for present purposes it is only necessary to deal with the few physical facts which serve to illustrate the enormous difficulties which beset those who seek to penetrate the Polar basin. The unexplored region of the Arctic Circle is estimated at 1,000,000 square miles—an area about as large as the continent of Australia. Apart from the primary object of attaining the highest latitude, or, in vulgar phrase, discovering the North Pole, there is a far larger field for scientific research than is generally appreciated by those whose attention is merely confined to the heroic aspect of Arctic enterprise.

Polar exploration means far more than the mere mapping of a route. The leaders of expeditions such as those of Dr. Nansen and Mr. Jackson require practical acquaintance with all the various and delicate instruments used for thorough geographical survey work, and practical knowledge of their use. It is required of such expeditions to furnish, in addition to a popular account of the voyage with its attendant incidents, such accurate and practical information as can be recorded by scientists. The temperature of the soil, snow, and ice, both on the surface and at various depths, evaporation, terrestrial magnetism, galvanic earth currents, hydrographical and pendulum observations, records of observations on atmospheric electricity, the growth and structure of the ice, the physical properties of the sea-water, besides collections of specimens in the departments of zoology, botany, and geology—such are the subjects of inquiry and the nature of the information required of a Polar expedition. In addition to compiling exhaustive data, the leader in his reports has to conform to the accepted mode of expressing the geographical facts that may be acquired; and here it may be useful to mention one or two illustrations, recalling also a few physical features relating to nature in the Arctic. The observations of previous explorers prove that sea-water, when exposed to the lowest temperature in the Arctic, freezes to a depth varying between 6 to 10 ft.; as the season changes the solid frozen ocean breaks up, and ice-fields are thereby formed, the smaller portions of which are termed floes. By constant chafing and collision the edges of these ice-fields and floes become broken, and in course of time the accumulation of broken ice forms itself into irregular piles termed hummocks, the lesser portions being called drift ice and brash ice. The margin of ice which adheres to the shores and is formed by the tides is known as the ice-belt or ice-foot. Icebergs are the largest masses of ice, and are formed on land in the shape of glaciers. The largest glaciers are to be observed in Greenland, which rises 9000 or 10,000 feet above sea-level, and where they cover a great part of the interior. Originally formed by snow, the ice is perfectly fresh. The extent of ice beyond the horizon can be fairly judged by the peculiar glistening of the atmosphere,

which is described as ice-blink; over open water the sky looks dark, and in this condition is termed water-sky. The wonderful northern lights, so often alluded to by Arctic voyagers, brilliant as they appear in the sky, contain but a small amount of actual light; this fact has been proved by the many ineffectual attempts to photograph them by means of the most rapid plates. It is a fact also worthy of repetition that, contrary to popular supposition, there are in the Arctic two focal points of extreme cold, one in Siberia and one in the interior of British North America, instead of a progressive lowering of the average temperature up to the geographical pole. With reference to the area in the immediate vicinity of the North Pole, it is a generally accepted theory that many islands exist; a partial proof of this lies in the fact that land was sighted to the northward of the furthest points reached by both the American and Austrian expeditions; but the absence of icebergs from the drift ice north of Spitzbergen indicates that the islands cannot be of any great size, by reason of their inability to support glaciers. Until the present date, the nearest approaches to the North Pole have been attained by Parry north of Spitzbergen, by Lockwood through Smith Sound, and to the east of Spitzbergen by Payer and Weyprecht, the Austrians who discovered Franz Josef Land. The distances from the actual Pole reached through these three routes do not materially differ, being all between four and five hundred nautical miles. As far as the value of scientific observations are concerned, the magnetic pole, which has been found at a point in the Arctic Archipelago north of America, offers in some respects as good a field as the North Pole itself. It must be borne in mind that the North Pole is not even a permanent point, for it moves a little each way on the circumference, after the manner of the axis of a spinning coin. There are strange and interesting phenomena for the successful explorer to witness when the North Pole is reached. For example, the Pole Star would be seen almost vertically overhead describing a tiny circle. In summer the sun would never appear far above the horizon, circling for half the year in a spiral, winding upwards until at a height of 25 deg. it would reverse its motion, circling downwards until lost to view for six months. Another peculiar experience will be that

DR. NANSEN'S HOUSE AT LYSAKER, NEAR CHRISTIANIA.

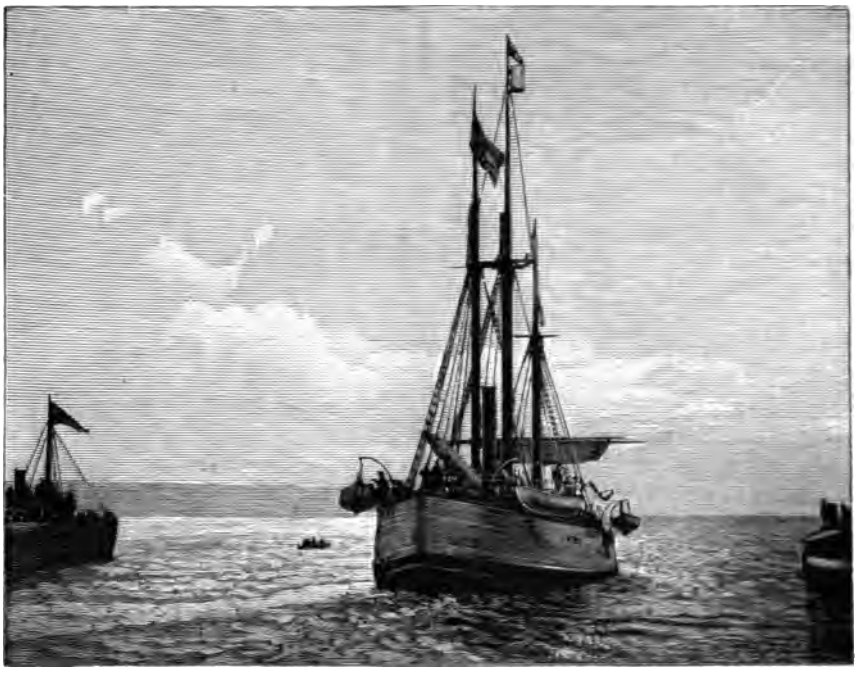
from the Pole every direction will be south; there will be no longer any direction to the east or west. Then again there will be no time: for the Pole is the meeting-place of all meridians. Perhaps the most interesting of all the strange effects will be obtained from studying the stars, each of which will appear, never rising or setting, and computing its horizontal circuit each twenty-four hours.

The foregoing statements have been referred to as likely to apply to the general understanding of Dr. Nansen's Arctic surroundings. Passing from the mere relation of natural facts, we next turn our attention to Dr. Nansen's expedition. Briefly, his scheme has been to enter the Kara Sea with his twelve Norwegian followers, on board his specially constructed ship the *Fram*, and to push northwards and eastwards in the direction of the New Siberian Islands, hoping that the warm currents caused by the great Siberian rivers would enable him to get well into the ice during the summer of 1893. Once frozen in the ice, he hoped to be carried northwards by the currents—in fact, past the actual Pole. That such currents do exist there is considerable evidence to prove. After committing his ship to the drifting ice—meanwhile making numerous excursions by means of sledging parties—he hoped to reach the East Greenland coast within two or three years. Dr. Nansen sailed from Christiania on June 24, 1893; and the last communication from him was dated Aug. 2, 1893,

from Chabarowa, Yugor Strait. Writing under that date, Dr. Nansen related the incidents of his voyage, and touched briefly upon his immediate plans—

"After having passed the Olenek River, on the Siberian coast east of the Lena Delta, we shall go northward along the west coast of the New Siberian Islands as far as we can in open water. I hope to be there in the beginning of September. It may be that we shall meet with unknown land or islands to the north-west of Kotelny, and, possibly, there may be open water along the coasts there. If so I shall, of course, use it as best I can. But, when we can get no further, there is nothing left except to let the *Fram* get beset in the ice and be carried along northward or north-westward by the current, which, according to my opinion, must run in that direction in those regions.

"Then there will probably pass a long time before we are drifted across the unknown Polar region and into open water again, or to some coast from which we can return home. In this time there will be nothing heard from us. But, when years have passed, I hope you will some day get the news that we are all safely returned and that the knowledge of man has advanced another step northward."



THE SAILING OF THE "FRAM" FROM CHRISTIANIA, JUNE 24, 1893.

From the date of this letter until the still unfounded rumour reached us recently of his welfare and of his successful attempt to reach the North Pole, we have heard nothing of Dr. Nansen's expedition. When comparing Dr. Nansen's programme with this latest report we are met with a puzzling fact. The report is practically to the effect that Dr. Nansen was sighted in the vicinity of the New Siberian Islands. If this be so it would naturally appear that the *Fram* had not been carried northward by the current, for it must be remembered that the New Siberian Islands were to be the starting-point whence the *Fram* was to drift northwards. It is, however, idle to expound theories to account for this rumour. It may have some foundation of truth, and, on the other hand, the rumour may have arisen from a native source and may refer to a sighting of the *Fram* by natives a long while ago. That the report is generally believed to be true does not compensate for the present lack of substantial proof. Dr. Nansen's first plan was to follow the course of the *Jeannette*

through Behring Sea, but as this would practically have amounted to a voyage around the world with attendant wear and tear and loss of time, the scheme was abandoned in favour of the route through the Kara Sea, along the Siberian coast, and thence, off the Lena River, northwards towards the New Siberian Islands. With reference to the ill-fated *Jeannette*, the tragic story of shipwreck disaster and subsequent starvation will be recalled with a thrill of horror. Yet the very disaster which attended Lieutenant De Long and his companions has been of service to Dr. Nansen in formulating his scheme, inasmuch that a number of articles belonging to the *Jeannette*, which was crushed by the ice and foundered among the New Siberian Islands, are supposed to have been borne northwards by the current, and were subsequently discovered on the coast of Greenland, after having, apparently, accomplished the identical journey upon which Nansen is now engaged. Indeed, the fact of the drifting of these relics, together with evidences of Asiatic wood and Siberian mud, which have from time to time been discovered on the coast of Greenland, having drifted on ice-rafts across the Pole or its immediate vicinity, have been prominent factors in determining Dr. Nansen's enterprise.

A feature of Dr. Nansen's scheme is that he prepared no line of retreat in the event of meeting with insurmountable difficulty. This fact will be found especially worthy of consideration in the case of the recent rumour which informs us that Dr. Nansen, having been successful, is returning viâ his starting-point, the New Siberian Islands. To the question as to how he would retreat in case of necessity without a properly provisioned base, Nansen's reply has always been, "*I will never retreat; I will go through to the other side.*"

It will thus be seen that in Dr. Nansen's scheme there is a very considerable element of speculation. Everything that experience can suggest and money can buy has been secured. The *Fram* has been lovingly constructed by Colin Archer, the famous Scotch-Norwegian pilot-boat builder, under the constant watchful eye of her commander. As a result of this incessant supervision the vessel when built exhibited what can only be described as a singular personality. The *Fram* bore the impress of Nansen's

THE LAST VIEW OF THE "FRAM."

character: she was strong, blunt, without decoration or consideration of effect. The ship's hold was stowed with five years' provisions; one or two of the panels of the cabin walls, painted by Nansen's friend, the famous Werenskiold, represented typical Norwegian scenery; in the cabin furniture there were numerous baths, but no looking-glasses.

It was my privilege to witness Dr. Nansen's departure from Norway, and in the course of conversation some time prior to the date of sailing, Dr. Nansen remarked, in reference to the doubts so freely expressed on all sides as to the feasibility of his scheme—

"Ah! They say we will never come back. They say I am a dreamer, and that I shall fail. Well, we shall see. I can say nothing in answer to them. I would only ask people to give me time. Nothing has surprised me more than the interest and sympathy that have been shown to my expedition by English people. I am very grateful."

Upon another occasion, when chatting about the strange fascination which Arctic life exercises on all who have once ventured within the solitary region, Dr. Nansen said in a spirit of true enthusiasm—

"Think of the Arctic summer sun! Think of the glorious sunshine reflected from mountains of snow-clad ice, shining upon little lakes of clear rippling water, where hundreds of seals and walruses playfully splash the water into glistening sprays of rainbow hue. What of the charm of the Arctic? Health, glorious health! Your muscles twitch with a desire for action. You eat like a horse, and sleep twelve or fourteen hours without a dream.

"You think the Arctic night is only one long spell of darkness? In winter the scene is almost as beautiful as in summer. The nights are clear; the moon and stars shine brightly upon the fields of hard white snow. Nature's mighty aspect is the charm and fascination of the Arctic regions."

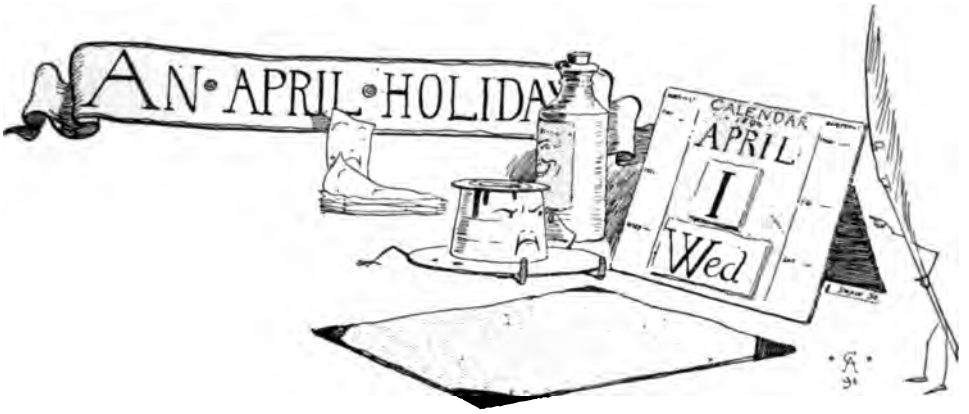
Of Dr. Nansen's personality, it is sufficient to say that he represents in himself the noble qualities which characterise the Norwegian people. He is a worthy son of a race famous for its honesty, kindness, and enterprise. In manner, he is quiet and reserved, yet full of assurance. His habits are simple, and he is exceedingly patriotic. In appearance he is a blonde giant, endowed with remarkable physical power.

The sailing of the *Fram* from Christiania on June 24, 1893, was an event that was invested with great dramatic interest. From early morning the vessel was surrounded by a host of small craft—Kyak canoes, miniature gondolas, racing skiffs, naval gigs, yachts, dinghys, and steam-launches, all more or less decorated with bunting and branches of silver birch. The spectators, representing the major portion of the population of Christiania, preserved a mournful silence. On the deck of the *Fram* all was in perfect order, and each member of the expedition, calm and steady, was at his respective post. Shortly after noon Dr. Nansen, looking slightly pale, boarded his ship, the anchor was weighed, and the *Fram* steamed slowly off, followed by a mass of small craft.

It rained, the wind blew cold, and the mournful silence of the occasion was only broken by the regular throbbing of the engines and the dismal barking of Dr. Nansen's dog. Half an hour's steaming down the fjord brought the *Fram* abreast Dr. Nansen's home at Lysaker, and here, for the first time during the day, the sun shone through a rift in the dark clouds, and, travelling over the pine-clad hills, the sunbeam gradually broadened and shone radiantly upon the shore a mile distant, revealing the figure of Mrs. Nansen, clad in a conspicuous white dress, standing upon the rocks by the water-side.

The attendant launches which had followed the *Fram* down the fjord soon afterwards slowed down. Words of farewell were shouted from all sides.

"Long live our Nansen!" "Come home again to us, Nansen!" "Farvel! Farvel!" Three lusty cheers were given by the occupants of the launches, and duly answered by the *Fram's* crew. The last word we heard from the *Fram* was Nansen's brave "Good-bye."



By PHIL ROBINSON.

I HAD no one to make an April Fool of, for I was all alone in the country with my work. So I made an April Fool of my work.

Over-night I carefully arranged my books on my table, freshened up the inkstand with a little more ink, laid out all my pens in a row, and put on the very middle of the blotting-paper (a nice new clean sheet on the top) a tempting little pile of scribbling paper. Then I turned down the lamps and began to knock the ashes out of my pipe.

"He always does this overnight," said the fat, little, old, conceited inkstand to a new quill-pen, "when he is going to work extra hard next day. What a time you will have! Scratch, scratch, scratch!"

"Shall I?" said the new quill pen. "What shall I do?"

"Oh, you'll see soon enough!" said the inkstand in a tone of voice that made the clean sheet of blotting-paper feel so uncomfortable all over that it turned pinker than ever. "And now I'm going to sleep. We'll have a hard day of it to-morrow, and I shall have to keep my lid open from morning till night. Oh, you'll see!" And then the inkstand shut down its lid with an obstinate little snap, and they all went to sleep.

I heard all this as plainly as ever Hans Andersen heard the tin soldier talking, while I was knocking out the ashes of my pipe on to the ashes of the log in the fire-place. I always burn a wood fire in my study, and you have no idea how nice it is, especially if you have cut the wood yourself. How they do burn, those little round brown logs, sawn off a young spruce fir that has been lying in the spinney all the year quite dead, while the ivy, like the robins in the story of "The Babes in the Wood" was covering it over with leaves! I like these best, and next to them I like the split beech-boughs, that crackle and talk so that the canary begins to sing and the cat can't go to sleep on the rug.

So I went to bed. And next morning, when I woke up, it was April Fool's Day, and the sun was shining on a dewdrop at the end of a leaf just outside the window, and it sparkled blue and green and orange; and a cock-sparrow was looking at it with his head on one side, as if he were not quite sure whether the dewdrop was fit to drink or not. That was how the dewdrop made an April Fool of the sparrow the first thing in the morning, but the sparrow did not care; he sat and chirped and chirped so hard that I was quite afraid he might do himself some mischief inside.

So I got up and went downstairs very quietly, so that my books and the inkstand and other things should not hear me, and put on my boots and gaiters, because of the dew on the grass, and went into the dairy for a long drink of fresh milk, and then out into the garden. A glorious morning, and all the birds out, singing and flying about together.

The wood-pigeons in the spinney were purring and cooing, but not all for love of

each other, for I could hear the angry beating of wings in the Scotch fir where two were quarrelling.

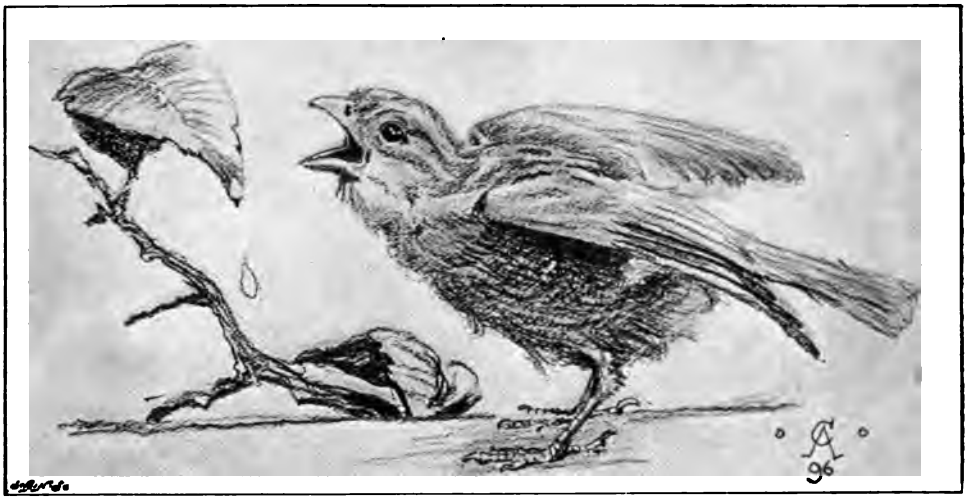
The woodpecker was flying from tree to tree with a ringing laugh as he flew, and overhead the rooks, the labouring men of the birds, were flying, full of talk, to their work among the furrows. A hare went comfortably limping across the paddock, well content with itself, for it had made a rare breakfast in the kitchen-garden, and nobody had frightened it all the morning. The squirrels were busy in the spruce husking fir-cones and spitting out the shells. You could hear the pieces come pattering down on the broad laurel leaves beneath. A pair of long-tailed tits were scrambling about on a yew, shaking out little puffs of yellow dust wherever they went. What a beautiful sight a yew-tree is in full flower, with the pale golden blooms against the glossy dark leaves! But the tits were not thinking of that; they were thinking only about the spider's webs which they wanted to fasten the lichens on to the nest that they were building under a drooping branch of the tree. It is beautiful to be out at this time! The birds are never so tame as they are now—never show themselves so freely.

And so to breakfast, and then out again into the air.

How puzzled the pompous old inkstand in the study must be getting! and what, I wonder, does the quill-pen think of him after what he said last night?

"You wait a bit," perhaps he said, "I have often known him be quite as late as this before. But he'll come in by and by and work all the harder: you see if he doesn't. And won't you have to work! You wait a bit." And the new quill-pen would think that of course the old inkstand knew all about it; and every time he heard anyone coming near the study door his little nibs would begin to chatter together with fright, and spots came out on the pink blotting-paper with waiting and anxiety.

But I was out in the garden in the sunshine, and the key of the study was fast asleep on the nail. The sun was well up now, and the bees were all in the elm together. This is another very pretty tree when it is in bloom, for the little puffs of rosy-brown flowers are set along the twigs so that when you see the boughs against the sky they look like branching ferns with chocolate-coloured fronds, and the honey-bees delight in them, just as they do in the lime-trees later on in summer. What portmanteaus these bees make of themselves! They fill their bodies with honey, stick plates of wax in between their scales, and carry on each of their legs a package of pollen. They are, like omnibuses, full inside and full out, plying backwards and forwards all day long from "the Bank" (where the wild thyme grows) to the hive. Even the fur on their backs they fill with pollen as they scramble in and out of the flowers, and when they get home after each journey they are carefully tooth-combed out.



HE CHIRPED SO HARD THAT I WAS AFRAID HE MIGHT DO HIMSELF SOME MISCHIEF INSIDE.

A PAIR OF LONG-TAILED TITS.

The crocuses are planted in patches all about, and the sun finds them out and worms them wide open, and then the bumble-bees come and clumsily plunder them, and the first butterflies, glad to see something bright in flower, hover about them, and then sit and sun themselves on the steps of the terrace.

Hark! the greenfinch has a nest close by. You can tell that by the long-drawn note of caution that it will keep on repeating as long as you are near it: an exasperating sound and a very foolish one for the greenfinch to make, as you can always find its nest by it. The chaffinch, too, has a secret about a little round ball of moss and hair and fluff that is tucked into the fork of a tree and stuck all over outside with lichens taken, perhaps, from the very tree the nest is in, so that it needs very quick eyes to find it. Nor does he tell you where it is, as the greenfinch does, but sits on a high bough crying "Spink! Spink!" till you go. The missel-thrush flies close past you scolding, and, if you look up, you see its great untidy nest in the sycamore; and yet, in everything else except the place it chooses for its nest, the missel-thrush is a very shy and clever bird. Can you hear the bullfinches? No? Listen again. And a quiet, plaintive little call falls on the ear. They are rambling about, doing mischief to the fruit-buds and keeping in touch with each other as they go by this pretty note. It is very difficult to hear at first, but, once accustomed to it, the ear catches the sound immediately, and you can follow them without seeing them once all round the orchard. In that laurel there a thrush is sitting on her eggs, and in that ivy-covered ash a blackbird has already got young ones.

And so homeward through the fields to lunch. The daffodils are out, and the dog-violets in pretty tufts along the banks, and the primroses in glorious bunches. There is coltsfoot, too, in golden abundance, and patches of dead-nettle in bloom. But the time of flowers has not come yet.

And then a long drive in the afternoon in the mellow sun, letting the horse walk half the way, for the sake of watching the hares in the fields and along the hedges, and the pheasants dotting the turf like birds of polished copper, and of listening to the sunset song of blackbird and thrush.

Then home again with the shadows of evening creeping across the paddock. A rabbit steals out from the shrubbery and trips across the lawn; the bats are in the air. The crescent moon is up, and the stars are already showing, though the sky in the west is still rosy with the promise of a fair to-morrow. And as I go in, I hear the owl pass, crying to its mate, and eager to reach the stockyard, where the mice are scampering. And so to dinner, and drawn curtains, and the cheerful lamp and a book.

Not once in the study all day! The inkstand has given up answering the quill-pen's questions long ago, and it was very grumpy at being wrong, after all.

"Just wait till to-morrow," was the last thing said.

HOLY INNOCENTS.

Gold on gold, snow on snow,
Height on height, row on row,
Greater in number these
Than the sands of the seas.

Yea, past all counting far,
Flower on flower, star on star,
Dimpled shoulder, cheek of peach,
As they lean each to each.

Golden heads, brows of pearl,
Oh, many a boy and girl!
Oh, many a girl and boy!
Mother's grief, mother's joy.

But amid snow and gold,
Gathered warm from the cold,
Fairer than gold and snow,
Should be two that I know.

KATHARINE TYNAN.

By S. L. BENSUSAN.

DURING the past few years the public has developed a marked liking for the performances of trained animals. In consequence of the interest displayed, the managers of variety theatres all over Europe have made the performing animal "turn" a feature of their programme. From cumbersome elephant down to dainty canary, all eligible birds and beasts have been called upon to contribute to the amusement of pleasure-seekers. Lions, tigers, bears, wolves, dogs, cats, and monkeys are trained for the stage or circus, and audiences watching the gentle public methods of the showmen go away with a positive conviction that the skill exhibited has been developed by kindness, and that superior instinct has made the performance possible. To throw a little light upon the subject and expose some of the brutalities practised upon the great majority of these unhappy animals this article is written.

The demand for trained animals has led to the establishment of houses on the Continent where they are broken in and trained. With the horrors that take place there we have nothing to do; the average foreigner has no soft place in his heart for brute creation. In Southern France, Spain, Portugal, and Italy sights that would make an Englishman ill pass unnoticed, and outside Europe humanity is a thing unknown. Consequently it is sufficient to say that the majority of the performing animals are trained abroad. To the training establishment comes some man or woman who wishes to purchase a troupe. It may be a broken-down acrobat or circus-rider, desirous of earning a living by the labour of others, or a demi-mondaine from Paris or Vienna lacking an opportunity of publicity. Whoever comes may buy; if the purchase consist of monkeys or elephants, the purchaser is warned not to be too barbarous, for these particular animals quickly succumb to ill-treatment; if they are dogs or bears—well, it does not much matter how they are treated. The purchaser is advised to have about a couple of rehearsals in each week, and with these and proper management the animals will earn a good living for their proprietor.

For the most part foreigners are the purchasers of animal troupes, and the majority of them are idle, vicious, and cruel. They come before the footlights smiling and bowing, now and again caressing their victims, but woe to the one that makes a mistake! Stripes and starvation are the mildest forms of punishment;

mutilation is not unheard of. Look carefully at the proprietor of the dogs that leap all round him in an agony of excitement and terror, which you, my good Sir or kind Madam, mistake for joy and friskiness; look carefully and you will see him hit or kick the nearest animal ever so slyly, you will see him raise his whip to indicate what is to happen when the performance is over, you will see his cruel eyes sparkling with anger while the showman's chronic smile never leaves his face. I have seen so much of this hypocrisy while gathering the facts for this article and have noted so many suggestions of torture and fear, that I can no longer watch a performance of trained animals, and look forward to the possibility of their being discouraged or, at least, properly superintended.

It must not be imagined that owners ill-treat their victims on the stage. Our London stage-managers, though I could not name a sentimentalist among them, will not permit such a thing. It is in the wretched, ill-ventilated underground cellars where the greatest number of them are kept that most of the weekly rehearsals are held, with an accompaniment of suffering that would shock a slaughterman. Many an animal goes through its performance in a state bordering upon the insane, with such an obvious terror of doing the wrong thing that it is really surprising how an intelligent audience can avoid seeing the true state of things. A significant fact is that when showmen first come to England they give their rehearsals on the stage, and when the manager will not allow their inhuman proceedings, they do all in their power to circumvent him. One man even tried to rehearse on the stage of a London theatre at eight o'clock in the morning, when he thought nobody would be about.

From some of our best known managers I have collected certain facts relating to particular troupes of performing dogs, which seem, as far as can be discovered, to suffer more than any other trained animals, probably because they have the greatest powers of endurance. I withhold names and full particulars, but these can easily be given.

Herr X is an Austrian, with nearly a dozen performing hounds. On the night of his first performance in London they were brought upon the stage by attendants, closely muzzled. Before the curtain rose Herr X went to each dog and half stunned it with a loaded stick. He then gave orders for the muzzles to be taken off and went through his turn, lashing the dazed animals freely with a long whip of hide and wire. Immediately after the curtain fell the animals were muzzled and led away. The stage-manager called Herr X to him and said that such a treatment was infamous and must not be repeated. The Austrian went into a violent passion and said that he only did in London what he did abroad, and that it was no concern of anybody's. Finding that he would not be allowed to persist in spite of his bluster, he went through future performances with the muzzles on his dogs.

At another theatre of varieties, whose management is of the very best, a foreigner and his wife came with a dog show. Nothing was noticed on the first night, and the proprietor left with his animals, saying he would come to rehearse on the following morning. At about half-past eleven on the succeeding day he rushed into the manager's office, a sorry spectacle. His coat was torn, his linen disarranged, one of his eyes was as black without as within. He hurriedly explained to the startled manager that while quietly rehearsing some ruffians he had never seen before set upon and mauled him. At his request the representative of the house accompanied him to the stage, and there found the dogs cowering in a corner, and the wife of the owner screaming out uncomplimentary remarks in a foreign tongue to some three or four stage hands who stood together in a group.

"What's the meaning of this disgraceful conduct?" cried the manager; "what's the cause of it?"

"This here, Sir," said one of the men, quietly handing a dog-collar with a cord attached, to the manager. "The brute had collars like this on all the dogs, and was jerking them. We've promised to lynch him if we catch him at it again." The manager took up the big broad collar; it was full of sharp jagged nails. He went up to the dogs, and they shrank from him howling. Their necks were scarred and bleeding. Thereupon the case assumed a different complexion, and the trainer was forbidden to rehearse with the collars, and advised that he had brought his punishment upon himself. As may be guessed, the man thenceforward ceased to rehearse at the theatre, and probably used the collars on his own premises, where there were no English workmen to interfere.

At yet another house I once watched a boy directing the movements of a pair of

elephants. His treatment seemed particularly gentle. When he wished them to move he pushed with the handle of a light whip, and they responded with

HE WENT TO EACH DOG AND HALF STUNNED IT WITH A LOADED STICK.

an alacrity that was inexplicable until examination of the handle revealed a long thin steel spike. One evening as I stood in the wings at a theatre, the curtain fell on a man who was fondling a little dog just taken from a tiny portmanteau. As soon as he was shielded from the sight of the audience he threw the little animal several yards for one of the assistants to catch. The throw was a clumsy one; the poor little dog fell on the hard boards with a pitiful yell. Thereupon the assistant caught it by one foot and tossed it into a basket, which he tied down and carried

out with the rest to proceed to another house of entertainment.

It is scarcely necessary to continue the recital of these brutalities. Suffice it to say that the lives of these dumb performers are, in the majority of cases, an everlasting torment, which only death can end. Bruised, starved, striped, and wounded, the animals in whose tricks humane people take delight lead an existence that calls aloud for alleviation. The people who own them are seldom the original trainers; they are lazy foreigners, with neither patience nor decency. Yet while animals can be trained by kindness to do nearly all the tricks at present performed, because there has been no inquiry into the matter a wicked condition of things has come about. I have thrown out hints about this matter before. In the columns of the *Sketch* at the beginning of the present year I called upon the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals to do its duty and justify its claims upon the public. The owners of performing animals should be registered, the accommodation of the animals and their bodily condition inspected. Theatrical managers would, I believe, give every help to the Society. Then, again, an audience has but to express disapproval with the proceedings, and the performing animal "turn" at once becomes as extinct as the megatherium or the dodo. One cannot help smiling at the list of convictions of the S.P.C.A., with the pathetic announcement that they pay for prosecutions and do not get the fines. A sheep, pig, or cow may be ill-treated once, which is a pity, but no great matter, while the wretched animals to whose forced gymnastics we offer an accompaniment of laughter and applause suffer day and night. Truly it is a case of straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel. There are a few instances of animals trained and treated kindly; but they are too rare to need mention, and must pass as the exceptions that prove the rule.

THE ASSISTANT CAUGHT IT BY ONE FOOT AND TOSSED IT INTO A BASKET.

In dealing with the foregoing details I have purposely avoided the more sensational ones, and omitted several that would be calculated to give positive offence. I have been told by people living within hearing of the cellars where some performing animals are constantly kept that Sundays are usually chosen for rehearsals, and that the entire day is made hideous by the sound of howling and wailing. And all this is done for the amusement and pleasure of kind-hearted people; for although we hunt foxes, hares, and rats, and shoot pigeons from traps, we are, perhaps, the best-hearted nation on the earth—ready to kill everything, but reluctant to torture anything. Perhaps now the subject is broached people will think, and having thought, will act.

Before drawing this article to a close let me quote the account of a visit to the quarters of a dog-trainer, as narrated to me by a man whom I will call Mr. X—

"I went to his rooms on a matter of

business," said Mr. X, referring to the dog-trainer; "and though sentiment isn't in my line, I felt perfectly ill. The practice-room was hung with spiked collars, whips, and other things, of all sizes and shapes. He had lost two of his dogs, and had sent for two more from the Dogs' Home, and was trying to teach one when I went in. He had it in a spiked collar, and the poor beast was too frightened and too stupid to do what he wanted. He was in a rare rage, he lashed and dragged and jerked, the dog got more and more terrified, until at last his temper got the complete mastery over him, and he—strangled the poor beast! I was quite glad to see him put it out of its misery. He used to come to the performance, and when a new dog missed its tricks once or twice we never saw the dog again; he would say he had lost it, and grin. I think he trains most of his own dogs, and he kills quite a number." I must state that Mr. X is not in a position to interfere in the matter, although he has given me some help in my pursuit for authentic details.

THE POOR BEAST WAS TOO FRIGHTENED AND TOO STUPID TO DO WHAT HE WANTED.

The managers of the variety theatres where trained animals perform are in a difficult position. They may suspect, they may even know of cruelties practised; but they can only look after proceedings upon their respective stages, and cannot be expected to depreciate their own wares. I have obtained the opinions of representatives of leading houses. At the Empire in Leicester Square, one of the best managed theatres in Europe, they are of opinion that animals can be kindly trained, and quote the names of one or two men whose treatment of their dumb performers is well spoken of by all who know anything about the matter. Neither Mr. Hitchins nor Mr. Slater is prepared to say that cruelty is not practised; they only state that bad treatment would not be permitted on the stage under any circumstances. Outside the house they cannot take cognisance of what goes on; but they are in sympathy with any movement that would do away with such abuses as may exist.

At the beautiful Palace Theatre of Varieties in Shaftesbury Avenue, the veteran manager, Mr. Charles Morton, was very outspoken. "Speaking personally," he said, "I should like all performing animal shows to be done away with. Fifty years' experience has taught me that they are attended with cruelty in varying degrees. I will not go into the question of training by kindness; it is possible in theory, and seldom or never apparent in practice. I should welcome any steps that would improve the present condition of things, and would give any assistance I could."

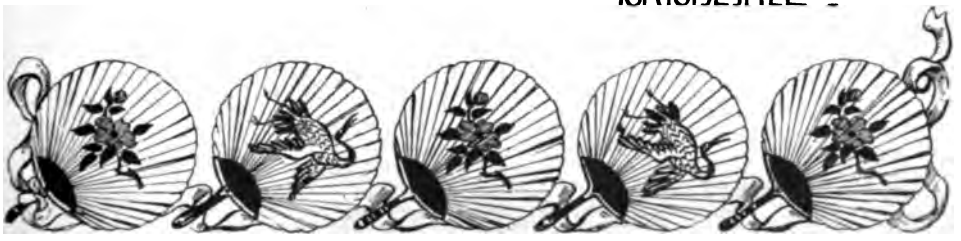
The Alhambra management had less to say. Mr. Douglas Cox is of opinion that performing animals can be kindly trained, and said that no cruel treatment would be allowed on the stage. He then took me to an outhouse on the premises and showed me a troupe of performing cats warmly housed and apparently well cared for. "They are performing here," he said, "and nobody has seen their owner strike one of them." He also told me of some performing parrots that were kept in an unoccupied room and tended by their owner with unvarying kindness, and went on to name a dog-trainer who is reputed to be humane in his methods. He concluded by assuring me of the interest that the Alhambra would take in the suppression of anything wrong in the methods under examination. It is a significant fact that no manager has definitely denied the substance of the charges made. Some, as may be seen, have professed ignorance — and I believe truthfully—but no one has attempted to take up the defence of the miscreants I have exposed; while the statement of Mr. Morton is of an importance that cannot be overestimated.

"Good Sir John," says Ford to Falstaff in "The Merry Wives of Windsor," "as you have one eye upon my follies, as you hear them unfolded, turn another into the register of your own, that I may pass with a reproof the easier; sith you yourself know how easy it is to be such an offender." How aptly a Spaniard might use the remark addressed to the "gross fat man" of Shakspere! How we have chuckled and hugged ourselves because we are not like the brutal Spaniards, who sacrifice half-a-dozen bulls and sometimes nearly twenty horses for the amusement of an afternoon!

The torture of the wretched horses lasts perhaps a quarter of an hour, but often only a quarter of a minute; in his excitement the bull probably feels no pain. But bulls and horses are large animals, their sufferings cannot be overlooked. A tiny performing animal cannot hope to reach the ear of the kind-hearted until he learns to bellow as loudly as a bull.

I freely confess that I have probably done an injustice to some few humane men in this article. I would willingly acknowledge that in very rare cases hard-working men who do no wrong may suffer; but this is unavoidable. The profession of the performing animal trainer is a brutal and offensive one, and one in which the sins of the many cannot be redeemed by the behaviour of the few. Let such as dare bring their methods into the light of day, and show they have nothing to dread from investigation; let the others earn their living another way, for their present affluent existence is a scandal alike to the managements employing and the public applauding them.

MY LADY'S FAN.
A.L. Bowley.
THE FLIRTED FAN OF
MY MISTRESS NELL:
SATIN RIBANDS AND
CREAMY FLUFF,
MOTHER O' PEARL AND
TORTOISESHELL.
COQUET DEFENCE OF
A DAMOSEL
GIRT IN THE ARMOUR OF
POWDER & PUFF,
THE FLIRTED FAN OF MY
MISTRESS NELL.
A MOCKING GLANCE FROM
THE CITADEL
PEEPS THROUGH A MIST
OF LACE AND RUFF,
MOTHER O' PEARL AND
TORTOISESHELL.



F.J. Bowley.
SHALL WHISPERING GALLANTS
ITS GUARD DISPEL -
FLICKED WITH THE SWAY
OF SILKEN CUFF,
THE FLIRTED FAN OF MY
MISTRESS NELL?
THERE SHIELDS A CITY
IMPREGNABLE
TO CAVALIER, COURTIER,
BRAVE OR BLUFF -
MOTHER O' PEARL
AND TORTOISESHELL
BLUE EYES ABOVE WERE
A WITCHEN SPELL
TO CHARM FOND HEARTS -
BUT ENOUGH, ENOUGH
THE FLIRTED FAN OF MY MISTRESS NELL,
MOTHER O'PEARL AND TORTOISESHELL.

WINTER AND SUMMER IN THE TRENCHES OF SEBASTOPOL.

By WILLIAM SIMPSON.

LIFE in the trenches before Sebastopol was described and illustrated at the time, but that was over forty years ago, and it is now all but forgotten, or many of the newer generation may perhaps never have heard of the terrible conditions under which our brave men suffered, fought, and died. The facts as told then moved the great heart of the nation; and some slight recollections of them may in the present day be worth re-telling, and they will, perhaps, interest those to whom the story of the Siege of Sebastopol is now only a matter of hearsay. It need not be assumed that this is altogether an exceptional piece of history, for war has been much the same at all times; but in the Crimean War there was a great struggle and a celebrated siege, that was carried on for close on twelve months, during which we had brought before us almost every variation of the trying conditions under which "the bubble reputation" is sought for "even in the cannon's mouth."

Here I propose to give some idea of the dreadful winter of 1854-55, which our soldiers so heroically endured; and to do this it may be well to begin with the construction of the trenches. In a siege the first parallel is made by a strong force of soldiers, each carrying forward a gabion and a spade, as well as his arms—in case of an attack—to a line that has been marked out by the sappers. This movement is made at the dusk of the evening, when they will not be seen by the enemy. Each soldier places his gabion on the line, close to each other, and at once begins with his spade to fill up the gabion with earth. A gabion is a basket, what in Scotch would be called a "creel," without top or bottom. The earth is taken from the inside of the trench—that is, the side farthest from the besieged works; because this adds to the depth of the parapet. Fascines, or bundles of twigs, are laid on the top of the gabions, and the earth is continued to be heaped up, and also thrown over on the outside so as to make a massive ridge, through which the enemy's shot will not penetrate. Sandbags—about the size of a pillow, filled with earth—are also used on the inner face of the parapet, which is thus made on the inside nearly vertical, while on the outside it is only a rounded slope formed by the earth that is thrown over. By the morning this is finished, and, as it gives protection, the engineers can then determine where the guns may to be placed; after which the embrasures are formed, and epaulements, magazines, etc., have to be constructed. The guns—with powder, shot, shell, etc.—have all to be brought down during the dark, and a garrison of so many soldiers must be kept day and night in the trenches for their defence, or the enemy would make a sortie and destroy everything. The advanced trenches are made in the same way as the first. The first parallel of our Right Attack was very nearly a mile from the Redan, that being the Russian work against which it was directed; the Malakoff was more to the right, and just about a mile distant.

This very slight description of a trench made for siege operations is almost necessary in order to form a correct notion of the position and surroundings of the men who had to fight and defend them. Their first object is to protect those in them as much as possible from the projectiles of the enemy; but unfortunately there is no protection from what the clouds may send down. It might rain cats and dogs, but umbrellas are not to be thought of. The very word "trench" implies, and the description given above explains, that they are partly ditches. The rain gathers into them, and as they are also roads—they are the lines of communication from one place to another—their condition in wet weather may be easily imagined: it is wading and not marching in such places that soldiers have to do at times. I have seen them with about a foot or so of mud, and in that case, if anyone tries to save his feet by walking outside, it is only done at the

"THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW OF DEATH": THE WORONZOFF ROAD.

risk of having a bullet through his head. The soldiers in the trenches had twenty-four hours of duty; and they were changed every evening, the relief marching down between sunset and the dark. It was a long spell of time to pass in a trench with nothing to do unless a sortie of the enemy took place during the time, and even in good weather it was far from being pleasant. But when the winter came on it was terrible. I have often seen during that time the reliefs going down while it was raining; the rain continued perhaps till midnight, when it changed to snow, and before morning it was a hard frost. Every one of the men must have been wet through, with no possible means of drying a rag upon them—and many had only rags, and rags of the thinnest; so when it changed to frost they must have become little better than icicles. No flesh and blood could stand such trials. There was one regiment that landed in the Crimea about 1100 strong, and some time about January or February it was reported that one morning there were not more than a score or so of these men fit for duty. Some were, of course, dead, but the greater number were in hospital; most of them had been sent to Scutari, where the care of Miss Nightingale and her companions had to make up for the dreadful effects of the trenches.

To realise fully the conditions in the trenches at Sebastopol during the winter of 1854-55 one has to suppose that the siege of London was taking place, and its valiant defenders, including the Volunteers, had to pass their nights in wet ditches at Hampstead and Highgate, in the month of January—and even if they took comforts with them that were impossibilities in the Crimea, the results can be easily imagined. The Emperor Nicholas was looking forward to these climatic severities, which the winter, as he expected, was to bring as an ally, when he uttered his now famous prophecy about "Generals January and February," which *Punch* took advantage of, and produced what became an historical cartoon, that was Death, as "General February" appearing to the Emperor himself, who died in that month.

Mud, during the winter in the Crimea, might be called the real enemy our soldiers had to contend with. A few hours' rain made the ground in the camps a slimy swamp, which was slow to dry in the winter sun. The feet of every man helped to produce this foe to health and life; these feet carried the mud into the tents—for door-scrapers or door-mats are not part of a camp equipment—and the inside of the tents did not differ much from the ground outside. At night the men had to make their beds on this, and sleep as best they could upon it. The road to Balaklava was metalled with mud—if the phrase may be allowed—through which commissariat stores and everything had to be carried to the camp. This was another of the difficulties of the position that was much talked about at the time. The distance was about five miles, and we know what that small space cost us. The Russians had to bring their supplies, reinforcements, and almost everything that their men required from Perekop by a road to Sebastopol, a distance of at least 120 miles. Now it becomes a very simple problem in proportion for the mind of anyone to work out: if five miles of transit over a muddy road caused so much trouble to us, how much would 120 miles produce to the Russians? The road from Perekop must have been in the same state as our short distance—probably even worse; and I have heard stories which told of its being covered with broken down arabas (native carts), dead animals, and even dead men. Some day the horrors of that long road during that winter will be revealed, and it will be a dreadful tale. One rumour has already leaked out—it may be an exaggeration, but according to it a whole brigade that passed Perekop never reached Sebastopol. This, if true, will take its place with the story of Dr. Brydon, "the Only Survivor" of the Khoord Kabul massacre; and it will be found that "Generals January and February," being impartial in their attentions, were as great foes to the Russians as they were to the Allied Forces.

The camp of the Naval Brigade was quite a contrast to the other camps. This was principally owing to "Jack" being a much handier man than "Tommy Atkins"—the last familiar term being a phrase unknown at that time. When the winter began Jack managed to make paved paths through his camp, and thus avoided the mud, and the tents were clean and dry within. In the winter evenings the tents were lighted up, and one could hear some instrument being played, and perhaps a song being sung. Being snug and comfortable, very few of them required the hospital. In the trenches there was less scope for the sailors' handiness, but even here he was always better off than the soldier. At home in peace times we are accustomed to see

soldiers so clean and trim it becomes a surprise during a campaign to see them otherwise. In the Crimea many of them had become ragged—I have even seen a Guardsman with a portion of his undergarment projecting through a rent in his

A SAILOR IN THE TRENCHES: JOHNSTONE.

trousers. I confess that the sight made me stare. I thought of him in that condition doing sentry duty at Buckingham Palace or at Windsor Castle. It was different with the sailors; they can all use a needle and thread, and if a hole appeared Jack patched it up with a piece of a sand-bag; some even made whole garments from sand-bags; the result was that most of them lost the appearance of being sailors, and would probably have passed for navvies. They seemed to wear whatever they could lay their hands on; as a consequence no two of them were alike. This was the time when the beard movement took place. It had begun before the war; at least a few artists and other forward mortals had ventured on the innovation, and had run the risk of being chaffed in the streets by boys and costers. The war carried on the new fashion, and "Crimean heroes" returning home with ample beards, the envy of all that saw them, quite established the custom. The sailors, of course, grew their beards, and most of them looked more like smugglers or pirates than man-of-war's men. I give a sketch of one of them; it was made in the trenches, and will give some idea of the sailors at the time. In my original sketch I find the word "Johnstone" written, which would, no doubt, be this man's name.

I wished to spend a night in the trenches, my object being to watch the effects of the guns when fired in the darkness, as well as to learn by experience what these places were in the night-time, and thus pick up subjects for a picture. Lieutenant Raby, of the Naval Brigade, took me in charge and promised to look after me on that occasion. He was a good man to go with, for he was very amusing, and at the same time a brave fellow: as evidence for this it may be mentioned that he earned the Victoria Cross in the trenches. A friend lately told me that he was still living—retired with the rank of Admiral. Should he see this I here offer him many salaams; and he will find I have not forgotten what turned out to be the pleasant night I spent under his guidance. I still remember some of his quaint talk, and how he explained a sailor's feelings when an Artilleryman tried in a fumbling way to make a knot that would not hold on a rope in raising a gun into its carriage; how Jack lost his temper at such exhibitions, and, with an explosion of words that cannot be repeated here, rushed in and did the job for the helpless landlubber. Raby explained that the sailors looked upon "the sodgers" as very poor creatures—a view to which the Crimean experiences gave some appearance of justification; but he thought that the sailors had a preference for the Artillerymen, because they wore blue coats, and not red ones like the Marines; a suggestion that might be worthy of consideration by those who study the psychological influence of colours.

I can recall going with my friend to have a look at the advanced trenches. Being dark, we did not seek the safety of the zigzags, which are the only means of communication in the daytime, and thus avoided the longer way; so we passed out at an embrasure, and walked across the open ground, where it would have been very dangerous, if not almost certain death, to have ventured when the sun was shining. We had not gone far when the wild screech of a shell was heard passing rather close to where we chanced to be at the moment, but Raby assured me it was not meant for us, but for some spot in our works where a new battery was in progress.

The engineers on each side, it may be explained, keep a very close watch on what is going on, and they can form a very correct guess as to the meaning and purpose of any commencement of a new trench; and as much of the work is done at nights, they get the range in the daytime, and keep up a course of constant firing on the spot all night, so as to retard the operation. Of course this does not stop the work; the new battery is made, but often at the cost of a certain percentage of life, which is a known condition of siege operations, and, it may be added, of all war operations as well. The shell passed in such near proximity to us, it occurred to me that in the dark we might accidentally, perhaps, stray into the line of this systematic firing; but this fear was only for a moment or so. I soon felt that my guide could be trusted. We reached the advanced parallel, and turning to the right, traced it along to the gorge of the Woronzoff Road. I ought to have stated that we were in the Left or Chapman's Attack; the Right and the Left Attacks were separated by the deep valley of the Woronzoff Road. We descended to the road, and went forward to our advanced piquets: these are pushed out at night in advance of the trenches for the purpose of watching the approach of a sortie or any night attack from the enemy. At this point I remember that we could see dimly the figures of the Russian piquets, pushed out for the same purpose as our own. Advanced piquets in sieges, as a rule, do not fire at each other; one objection to it is that it would alarm the troops in the trenches without sufficient cause, as they might suppose that an attack in force was coming on. I think I have read that in some of the sieges that took place in the Peninsular War the English and French piquets fraternised, and bottles of wine or articles of food were at times exchanged between them.

The night turned out to be a very quiet one; I had not the luck of a sortie taking place. I watched the effect of the guns when they were fired in the darkness; this soon convinced me that the sudden flash of bright light when all around is black, produces an effect beyond the powers of paint to reproduce, and all that could be hoped for in a picture could only be a suggestion of the brilliant glare that did not last longer than an instant. I had a sleep somewhere in one of the trenches, and in the grey dawn of the morning a little middy asked me if I would like a drop of hot coffee; he was sitting in a hole he had scooped out in the first parallel, or, perhaps, a "Whistling Dick" had done it for him. There were two or three holes made in this way that were utilised. I found the coffee very acceptable; and so ended all that I can now recollect of my night in the trenches.

When the spring began to show itself the trenches were more comfortable, and the heavy hand of sickness from wet and cold ceased to be a scourge. A beautiful crocus of an orange-yellow colour sprang up in great quantities, and it was a curious sight to see them, particularly behind the batteries, where the ground was covered with round shot and fragments of shells that had come from the Russian guns—murderous implements, among which the delicate flowers came up and shone bright. When the summer months came, gay butterflies fluttered over the batteries and trenches, heedless of danger; and lizards scrambled about, their trembling, excited movements suggesting that they were in great fear. The insect life seemed to be increased by the hum in the air of the musketry projectiles—conical bullets had

A NAVAL OFFICER IN THE TRENCHES: LIEUTENANT RABY.

come into use then. In the advanced trenches one could hear the bullets of both sides as they passed overhead; the sound varied according to the distance. When one passed near, it might be described as only a flash of sound that could be heard, its

speed carried it out of hearing so quickly—but it was a sharp, piercing hiss, angry and wicked-like, as it flew along, perhaps on its message of death. Those that passed at a greater distance produced a hum that sounded more like that of a bee, and were even musical and pleasant to hear. Those that were very distant, but still near enough to be audible, could be heard for a longer time, and the hum was faint and fairylike — as if some invisible spirit was passing through the sky. In the advanced trenches the shells from both sides also passed overhead. There was nothing musical in them—they made a wild screech, which might suggest that they were enraged demons in a very great hurry. Although at times they were ugly customers, as one of the Illustrations will show, yet I began to look upon them (I speak here of the shells of that period) as noisy blustering fellows, that were comparatively harmless. It was the rifle-bullet I learned to dread. It comes stealthily, gives no warning, and no chance of dodging. The only hope of safety from it is in being careful to keep under cover.

This found an unfortunate illustration in the fate of Captain Marsh, of the 97th Regiment, a gallant young officer. He had to go to the trench behind with an order of some kind, and to save time, instead of passing round by the zigzags, he attempted to cross over in the open. As he started someone called out, "They are shooting"; and he replied, "Shooting is not hitting." These were his last words, for he had not gone many steps when a bullet found its billet, and he fell dead. I had a slight but, luckily, a harmless experience of my own. The Russians had established some rifle-pits at the "Quarries"—a spot well known at the time in our Right Attack. One night our people drove the enemy out of them, and turning the works, connected the spot with our then most advanced trench towards the Redan. Colonel Egerton of the 77th was killed that night in the action, and the spot became known as "Egerton's Pit." I went down a day or so after to sketch the spot, more particularly because rifle-pits were then beginning to play an important part in the siege. When on the ground I wanted to see one of the Russian rifle-pits that had been destroyed, but had not been included in our works; to do this it was necessary to put my head over the parapet, the soldiers telling me to be quick about it. I looked over: a second or so was enough for my

A SHELL: AN UGLY CUSTOMER.

purpose; but my head was scarcely down again before the angry "ping, ping" of the enemy's bullets came rattling about the spot. The 41st were on duty that morning, and, after sketching some of them for my picture, one said: "Please, Sir, put 41 on our caps, so that our friends at home may see it, and they will know what we are doing here." On the large lithograph that came out at the time the number is quite distinct. Under such circumstances the soldiers' appeal would have been enough, and I should have felt in duty bound to give a small detail of this kind; but at the same time I had the idea that these two figures might some day in the future give an additional interest to the picture.

It is instructive to read the statistics of the large amount of ammunition expended in a battle or a war and the comparatively small proportion of casualties that result from it. The immense quantity of projectiles that lay between our trenches and the camp, most of which had merely passed over and touched no one, led me to think it was a lucky circumstance that the space a man occupies is so very small in contrast to the space around him. The improved weapons of the present day and the constant rifle practice that goes on will in the future make siege operations far more deadly than they have been in the past.

The Woronzoff Road derived its name from Prince Woronzoff, who made it to connect Sebastopol with Alupka (where his magnificent palace is situated) and Livadia, the Imperial Summer Palace—as well as Yalta, which last is now a well frequented summer resort. From the heights on which our camps stood it descended by a valley which deepened into a bare and wild rocky gorge at its lower end. This formed the way down to our trenches—at least, to the Right Attack. In the Illustration of it which appears with this article, the path up to the first parallel may be seen on the right. There were caves near the top in which powder was kept, and I think a telegraph was established in them during the latter part of the siege; but the thing that surprised everyone who visited the trenches by this road was the quantity of missiles that lay in it. There were round shot, fragments of shells of all shapes and sizes, as well as whole shells that had not burst. Many of the Russian shells failed in this way. These had come principally from the Malakoff, and, passing over our batteries, then rolled down into this valley. Some accounts describe the road as being literally paved with shot and shell; this was hardly an exaggeration, for one might have walked on them for some distance without touching the ground. Covered with these messengers of death, this ravine was the route to the trenches, from which many never returned alive; it was also the way by which the wounded and the dead were brought back to camp. From these sombre associations this spot received the name of "The Valley of the Shadow of Death."

On the night of June 17—that was the evening before the combined attack of the French and British, the success of which was intended to have wiped out the recollection of Waterloo between France and England, but the attack unfortunately failed—I was to have slept in Colonel Woodford's tent; this was in the camp of the rifles on Cathcart's Hill. But we received news during the evening that there would be patrols all round the ground to prevent non-combatants from approaching the batteries. This would not suit my purpose to be kept back, so about midnight I went out and made my way in the dark to the Woronzoff Road; crossed it, and somewhere above I found a hole in which I lay down, my plan being to advance as soon as daylight appeared. The trenches would have been safer, but being without uniform, I feared to venture there alone at night. I lay down, and shortly afterwards I could hear the tread of the troops marching along the road to be ready for the attack in the morning. To many that night it was in reality "The Valley of the Shadow of Death." My friends in camp had special intelligence from headquarters that the assault was not to take place till two hours after daylight; but at General Pelissier's request, late in the evening, this plan was altered, and the attack was arranged to begin before the dawn. After long listening to the subdued tramp of the men, I fell asleep in my strange bed-room, and did not waken till the fight had begun. It was a wild orchestra of sound, never to be forgotten; but to describe the battle, and why it failed, would require many pages, and it is not my purpose here to relate these greater events of the war.

In the midst of such important historical doings there was one slight incident of quite another kind that came to my knowledge, very strange in itself under the circumstances, and it may be of interest to naturalists. I forget the exact date, but it was when the summer months had come in, that I chanced to go down to the Left Attack, and in passing along the first parallel, I noticed a sailor sitting by a gun, where he was whittling some

bits of wood. I put the question to him as to what he was making, and he said, "A cage, Sir." On further inquiry why he was making such an article, he pointed to a nest at his side with young in it. I asked where he found the nest, and he, projecting his hand towards the embrasure of the gun, said, "Out there, Sir." If this man told me correctly where he found the nest—and I saw no reason to doubt his words, except the surprising conditions under which the nest must have been made, the eggs laid, and the young ones hatched—yet while all these delicate operations were being performed by the birds, the shells of both sides in the contest must have been screaming over the spot, and the muzzles of the guns in our batteries could not have been very distant from them. How the birds ventured there at first, and why the timid creatures remained, is hard to explain. Here was love—true love, too—in its gentlest form at the cannon's mouth. To me the incident seems to be even more remarkable than that of the lamb nibbling grass out of the mouth of a rusty old gun in Landseer's picture of "Peace"—one of the happiest of the artist's suggestive touches—and I have always assumed that that was a thing he must have seen.

One day in April I chanced to call at Lord Raglan's headquarters, and Captain Calthorpe—one of the aides-de-camp, to whom I was indebted at the time for many kind acts of attention—told me he was going down to the trenches with a flag of truce, and invited me to accompany him. What particular object this had in it I do not know, beyond the fact that one of our officers had been taken prisoner a night or two before, and letters as well as a box or two of clothing were to be sent in to him. At that date *parlementaires* took place on the extreme left of the French Left Attack, near to the Quarantine Church. We had to ride, and a trooper of the 8th Hussars had the boxes and the flag of truce—a piece of white cloth on the end of a lance. On reaching the trenches we, of course,

THE FLAG OF TRUCE.

had to walk, with a couple of French soldiers carrying the boxes. At the advanced trench the trooper raised the flag, and a French trumpeter sounded a call. All firing ceased on the outside, but a *parlementaire* is not established till a white flag has been shown on the other side; when that became visible we all got up and looked over the parapet. Captain Calthorpe passed over into the open, the soldiers with the boxes going with him; as I was *en bourgeois*, not in uniform, I had to remain behind. A Russian officer was seen coming forward, and the meeting took place about half-way between the opposing forces. The business did not take long to transact; as soon as the officers had returned and were again under cover, the flag of truce was taken down, and the ordinary conditions of the siege were resumed. There were a number of rifle-pits that the Russians had established in front of their line of works, and as the men in them could not be changed from daylight till sunset, they came out during the truce, and walked about to stretch their legs. The advantage of the colour of the Russian great-coats was here very evident: it was exactly the same tint as the rifle-pit and the earth around; a man appeared as if he were merely a piece of the pit that had risen up and walked about—perfect autochthons, they might have been called.

TARTAR SHEPHERD IN THE TRENCHES OF THE RIGHT ATTACK—1879.

In 1879 I had the satisfaction of revisiting the Crimea, and wandering over the remains of our old trenches which were still visible. Men were digging into the mounds for the bullets that were to be found; and it may be supposed that it repaid them to do so, a striking evidence of the quantity of lead that had been

expended during the siege. On this old historical ground that had been so familiar to me when war reigned supreme over it, I came upon a group that again recalled Landseer's picture of "Peace." This was a young Tartar shepherd with his flock of sheep, grazing among the remains of our batteries of the Right Attack. It was the spring-time, and the lambing had begun, the boy — for he was little else—was watching a tender young thing that had just been born. He muttered some words to me about the lamb in his own tongue, which I could not understand; so I pronounced the word "Angliski" to him, the Russian form of the word "English." The result was startling; he gazed at me with open mouth and eyes, astonishment and fear were expressed on every line of his face—for a moment he almost lost his breath, as he muttered a long-drawn-out "A-a-ah." This told me as plainly as words could that he had never before seen an "Angliski," and that he had listened to dreadful tales of the war from his childhood. He had heard of the batteries, the cannon, the bullets, and all the horrors of the siege, in which everything was no doubt wildly exaggerated, and the "Angliski," instead of being ordinary human beings, would be described as little short of fiends or demons; in all probability as nurses at home here used to frighten children with the word "Napoleon," the word "Angliski" had been the bogy of his early years; and at last here was one of these demons standing before him!

JESSIE TRENCH'S EXPERIMENT

By E. RENTOUL ESLER.

THERE never had been any sensation known in Grimpat like that which followed the announcement that David Dale had inherited a fortune. He had not been held of much account before this, in spite of his good-looking face and tall, loosely built figure, for there was an element of the loafer in him, both by nature and education, and an industrious community is wont to hold this type in peculiar disesteem. He was an only child, a posthumous child too, and his nervous little mother, who never quite recovered from the shock of his father's sudden death, could scarcely bear him out of her sight. David had, therefore, never been put to a trade—his mother saw dangers for him in each—and so his skill developed only in those directions that demand no apprenticeship. If he worked in the fields at harvest-time it was only because his mother could do the same, and by actual observation convince herself that he did not get wounded among the reapers or trampled on by the great farm-horses. The neighbours thought this dreadfully silly, but they excused Mrs. Dale because they considered her a little "touched"; and when she died they felt for David's helpless and unprotected condition, although he was twenty-two.

It was late for him then to learn a trade, but it was open to him to enter farm service, and many would have been glad to employ him, for he was strong and not unskilful; but he preferred to live on in the little two-roomed house with the loft above it, to accept odd jobs of field work as they came his way—as carter's assistant in the spring, as field hand at harvest-time, as fruit-picker in the autumn, labouring in his garden spasmodically, and snaring rabbits or wild pigeons when his larder ran low, or even accepting a meal from a neighbour without any air of discomfort or disdain. There were girls at Grimpat who fancied David for his good looks and his equable temper; but their fancy was known to be meaningless: one can hardly take a man seriously who lives as irresponsibly and thoughtlessly as a squirrel. Jessie Trench thought it unseemly that he should live like that, and be looked down on and undervalued; and she had taken occasion once or twice to reason with him. But David answered with what was unconsciously the cream of Epicurean philosophy. "One can only be happy," he said, "and I am happier sitting in the sun when the weather's mild, or blowin' a pipe of boor-tree of a winter's evening, than if I worked regular, and had a sovereign or two to the good."

"But you waste your time," Jessie said reflectively.

David laughed. "Well, I dunno; how much can one do after all, when one is put to it? We all make such a pother to earn something, to be somebody, that we miss the good of living. I have all I want and I enjoy myself, and what more could I do if I was a king?"

"You could be useful."

"Most folks think they're useful if they only meddle enough. I mind my own business, and that's something for the neighbours to be thankful for, if they would only look at things that way." From which it will be seen that David was a philosopher whose wisdom deserved honour that Grimpat did not accord it.

He had no expectations from any quarter, nor any traditions of relatives gone far afield into those remote and picturesque regions where wealth may be believed to abound; and therefore, when a lawyer's letter invited David to call at an office in Nutford that he might hear of something to his advantage, he was as much surprised as anyone. "Maybe someone has left me a watch, or a five-pound note, because I'm not a bad sort of fellow," he thought hopefully, his mind running on legacies in connection with legal communications, as is the rustic way.

The lawyers gave David more trouble than he saw any reason for, insisting on a copy of the marriage certificate of his parents, and a guarantee of his birth and baptism before they would even supply him

with the information that a brother of his father's had died in California, and that David was his heir-at-law.

"How much did he leave?" David asked.

"Fifteen hundred pounds, more or less," was the reply.

We use the expressions "vast fortune," "millions of money" as symbols, without attaching definite meaning to them. To David the words "fifteen hundred pounds" conveyed exactly the same idea of illimitable potentialities of expenditure and enjoyment. In all his life, odd as it may

"ONE CAN ONLY BE HAPPY," HE SAID.

seem, he had never possessed five shillings, for such purchases as he made were on the credit system, and met by instalments as he earned a trifle. And to think that now he should have fifteen hundred pounds! He walked home with his head whirling, but before he reached Grimpat a definite plan had been evolved in his mind. He was thriftless, but he was not a fool, and his sudden good fortune merely turned his feet into the prudent paths that hitherto he had had no particular reason for treading.

"I will buy a farm," he said, "a bit of freehold; I will look about while they are realising the money; and I will stock it, and get all the implements. That will take a slice of the capital, but then I'll be my own master, and able to live like a king."

At first the story of David's good fortune had been received with some doubt. Visible romance was rare in the neighbourhood; but some neighbours whose curiosity was greater than their scepticism made business excuses for calling on the lawyers, that they might cautiously put a final question regarding David's inheritance. When the statement was confirmed they overflowed with congratulations. David had no enemies: no man owed him a grudge, no man envied him. As far as it is possible to rejoice in good fortune that was never likely to come their way, the neighbours rejoiced on David's account. And their daughters rejoiced too, but less openly. They had always liked David; now it would be prudent to like him very much indeed, provided the feeling could be rendered reciprocal.

It was wonderful how many people asked David to tea, and listened with respectful eagerness to his plans, and gave the best advice possible regarding his intended investment. And in the matter of new frocks and fresh ribbons quite a number of girls blossomed out into sudden beauty.

Jessie Trench watched all these manifestations with eyes to which a sudden spark of bright fire was added. "They are all mighty fond of him now, because he is well-to-do," she said. "I was fond of him when he had nothing; but he won't think of that when the others are after him. Men are all alike, soft-headed and as vain as peacocks," which shows that Jessie's personal pain was leading her to unfair generalisations.

Having had a preconception, and having now a grievance, Jessie showed to distinct disadvantage. She never met David without flinging his good fortune and his changed behaviour in his face, and she missed no occasion of saying biting things of whatever person had recently been most cordial with him. This pained David, who was primarily good-natured and guileless. When things went amiss with him he had taken it patiently: now that they went well he was glad and content; and therefore Jessie's voice broke into his peaceful mood like a croak of disaster. It was not his way to argue or to bandy words with anyone—dislike of unpleasantness was the root of his philosophy. He therefore got into the habit of avoiding Jessie, of taking another turning when he saw her coming, or of slipping into somebody's house if she were too near to be escaped that way. All this was gall and wormwood to the girl, who lay awake at night to think it over, and who grew thin and sharp-featured pondering it in the daytime. At this time she hated every girl in Grimpat, and now and then almost included David in the category of detestable people.

"But I'll be even with them yet," she said, and let an ugly thought that had crept into her mind grow and grow.

It would be interesting to know on what principle women devoid of almost everything that would seem to make life beautiful or desirable are credited with supernatural powers—why to women who have enriched their own lives with nothing should be ascribed the power of being able to confer limitless good fortune on others—why it is always the saddest, the ugliest, the most unfortunate that are called witches. Grimpat had its witch, a forlorn old woman, whom popular opinion had conspired to keep outside the village, and popular disfavour to render very desolate. They called her "Mother" as a means of conciliating her—"Mother Murgatroyd." And they had a superstitious dread of handling her money, which circumstance alone kept Mother Murgatroyd beyond the reach of destitution. She possessed a single half-crown, which it was her art to keep as bright as when it emerged from the Mint. Mother Murgatroyd never begged: when she required anything she went where it was on sale, asked for it, and laid down her shining coin. "I won't take your money, good mother; you are welcome to what you require," the vendor would say politely, pushing the coin and the purchase together towards her. A man of curmudgeon tendencies had once accepted the coin, giving her change with

her purchase; but the whole village knew before nightfall that when he next looked in his money-drawer that peculiar coin was absent, while Mother Murgatroyd presented it on the evening of the same day elsewhere. What they did not know was that his wife had run after Mother Murgatroyd with it, and had thrust it into her hand, saying, "We cannot take your money."

The thought that had come into Jessie Trench's mind, born of mingled feelings of love and hate, ambition, rage, and disappointment, was to buy a love-philtre from Mother Murgatroyd for the winning of David Dale.

A thought like this does not come instantaneously; it grows, and is reasoned with in detail before it finally dominates. It was only David's good Jessie thought she desired—his happiness, his possession by a wife who loved him, and not by a wife who merely desired to share his good fortune.

If David's indifference were the only obstacle that stood in the way of this desirable consummation, it would be fair enough to overcome it by whatever means were available. Nevertheless, it was hardly with a confident aspect that Jessie slipped from her own house one evening, and making a wide détour, as if her goal were in quite another direction, crept up at last through the dusk to the one-windowed cottage, whose red eye blinked ominously into the gloom. The girl had merely raised her hand to knock at the door, when it opened of itself, and Mother Murgatroyd stood on the threshold, her black cat looking up with an air of hungry wildness by her side.

"I wanted a word with you," Jessie said. Her face was muffled in her shawl, and her voice sounded huskily through it.

"You are welcome; I knew you were coming," the old woman answered.

"How did you know it?" Jessie asked, when the door had closed behind her.

A wood fire was glowing on the hearth, and bunches of herbs hung amid other comestibles from the roof. Only the old woman's face and the black cat supported the traditions of the eerie.

"I knew you would come to me about six weeks from the time David Dale came into his fortune."

"He has not got his fortune yet."

"No. He will get it in five days; that will just leave time to prepare what you want."

"Oh! you *are* a witch!" Jessie cried in terrified admiration.

Mother Murgatroyd seemed well pleased. "I shouldn't think much of myself if I wasn't a witch sometimes," she answered complacently.

"What will you want for it?" Jessie asked rather fearfully.

"For the charm that will win David Dale's heart? Oh, only a trifle when the work is done. The price of his best field of oats when you are his wife. You will be able to afford that, and he 's so easy-going he will never miss it."

Jessie drew a breath of relief. She had half expected to be asked for some unholy equivalent—her soul, some years of her life, or something else equally awful and abstract. The price of a field of oats was a very human and homely thing.

"You shall have that with pleasure," she said readily. "And now tell me how it will work. How soon shall I know that I have won him?"

"You will know very soon. He will soften to you at once from his taking of it; but it will not be till he comes back again that he will declare himself."

"Yes; and how must I give it him?"

"Either in your own house or his. Your own for choice, that would be most seemly. Everybody entertains him now, so you can do the same."

"Yes, yes. Now give it to me, and take my promise of the payment anyhow you like."

"I couldn't give it to you, you must make it yourself."

"Oh!" Jessie said with some dismay. "I thought you kept things like that in jars, and sold them to people in distress."

"I might have done when I was younger, but spells of that kind are not the best. You work them with your own hands and then they won't fail."

"And what will it involve me in?" Jessie asked falteringly. This view of the case seemed to imply a double responsibility.

"Nothing! You give it to him, and that 's an end of the matter."

"And him; it won't do him any harm?"

"Not a bit; except to warm his heart with a love he never felt before."

"I would rather lose him than harm him," Jessie said firmly.

"It won't harm him; and this is how it 's made." She leaned forward and took the girl's hands in hers, and her breath struck coldly on Jessie's pale cheek as she whispered her instructions in her ear.

"It is horrid!" the girl said with a shudder when she had finished.

"Oh, well, if you are so mighty particular you can leave him to marry Fanny Lane."

"I won't!" Jessie said. "I'll do it." For Mother Murgatroyd had craftily mentioned the most detested of her rivals. She rose as she spoke, and drew the shawl round her face again. "And you will have the price when it falls due. Good-bye." She went out into the dusk, and Mother Murgatroyd peered at her through the narrow window as she descended the hillside. "What fools girls are!" she said with a husky laugh, and then she sat down by the fire and warmed her skinny hands at the blaze.

"IT IS HORRID!" THE GIRL SAID WITH A SHUDDER.

Five days afterwards David Dale came striding swiftly along the road from Nutford. The legacy had been paid at last, and he carried it, a solid load—though minus the lawyer's fees—in gold in his pockets. It had been his fancy to have it paid in gold. Banks were uncertain things, he said, and letters of credit conveyed nothing to his intelligence. If he had a fortune he wanted to see it, realise it, feel it as a tangible burden. So the lawyers had paid him the money, with advice to be careful and admonitions regarding the wisdom of depositing it in the bank.

"You may be robbed," they said warningly as he was about to withdraw.

"Nobody in Grimpat would steal from David Dale," he answered confidently, "and there's no strange man that I'm afraid of single-handed." So he came along the road with a light heart and a

tangible weight in each coat pocket. That weight spoke to him of a pretty farmhouse framed in an orchard, fat cattle in sheds, and sleek horses nibbling at the hay in well-filled mangers, and bee-hives, and undulating corn-fields, and a long succession of happy prosperous years. He saw a woman's face by the cottage-windows, a woman's figure among the garden flower-beds, but the face and figure were symbolical, for David had as yet no definite conceptions of any actual girl as his wife.

It was known in Grimpat that he would receive his fortune that day, and so there was nothing surprising in the sight of Jessie Trench standing by the gate as he came up the road.

"I wanted to be the first to wish you good luck," she said.

"Thank you, Jessie. I've got it all here," he struck his coat pockets as he spoke. "It's an odd thing now to think of a man carrying a farm, and stock, and implements, and a house, and who knows what besides, to each side of him."

"It's a load, I've no doubt," Jessie answered, laughing constrainedly. "And you are tired with the weight of it, I am sure. Will you come in and sit awhile, and rest, and have a cup of tea?"

The sunlight fell full on her, and he noticed for the first time how pale she was. "You look bad, Jessie," he said.

"It's the heat, I think," she answered, turning indoors as she spoke.

The kitchen looked peculiarly trim and neat, and the tea-table was laid as if on speculation.

"I don't suppose father will be home for an hour or more," Jessie said. She spoke with a certain accent of fatigue, and there was some nervous tension in her figure as she moved about her work. "But I don't suppose you will mind a cup of tea with me alone."

"Not at all, Jessie. It's not the first I've had, and I don't forget old kindnesses. But you've changed lately." Her heart had softened at his previous words, and for an instant her resolution failed her. Now she grew hard again.

"It's you that have changed before the voice of flatterers, and people that value you only for what you have," she said.

David sighed. Jessie was a dear girl, but she had odd views of people and of circumstances. To change the conversation he began speaking of his plans, and this subject was so interesting that he scarcely noticed how little reply it elicited. By and by the tea was made, and Jessie poured it out before she asked him to turn round that they might discuss it together.

"Uncommonly good tea," he said approvingly, as he drank a second and a third cup.

Once again he said, "Jessie, you look real bad; I'm concerned about you." At that Jessie burst into tears, and all David's efforts at consolation failed to comfort her. She only said once or twice, "Be thankful for your good luck, and of all things be thankful that you are a man," which enigmatic sentence set David pondering as he walked homeward.

Jessie went early to bed that night. She complained of headache, and said fretfully that she was tired of hearing of David Dale's prosperity.

But she lay awake almost all the night, and already she was tasting the bitterness of an accomplished deception. She had no doubt of the success that would attend Mother Murgatroyd's spell, but already she was saying in her heart, "His love will never be the same to me as if it had come of itself."

Jessie's father was a mason, earning good pay, and she enjoyed the independence peculiar to only daughters who manage the home. Her father was very fond of her, and that day at breakfast he noticed that she was dull, and made various inquiries regarding her health and her occupations when he was from home, which rendered her a little impatient.

"I am well enough," she said fretfully: "I wish you would leave me alone."

After he had gone, the sunlight seemed to come into the house aggressively, and she shut the door impatiently, as if to shut it out, so that she did not see a figure that came unsteadily up the garden path, or hear anything until the door was burst roughly open. It was David Dale who stood on the threshold, his hair clinging damply to his forehead, his coat flung open as though something suffocated him.

"Jessie, Jessie," he said, and his voice had a dreadful intonation of hoarse despair. "I have lost the money!"

She had anticipated something so much worse that for the moment this was almost a relief.

"Lost it!" she cried tremulously. "Tell me how."

"I don't know how. I believe I hid it. I meant to hide it till the farm was purchased. I thought of twenty spots where I could hide it about the place; but I don't remember whether I hid it at all or not. I don't remember anything since I

"I HAVE LOST THE MONEY!"

spoke to you yesterday. I remember the last thing you said, that it was fortunate to be a man, and I remember going down the road, and after that it is all a blank till I missed the money this morning when I woke."

"Did you look everywhere?" Jessie asked, with stiff, cold lips.

"Everywhere. I have turned the house upside down, I have examined every recently touched spot in the garden, I have had my fingers in every cranny in the walls, and it is gone, Jessie, it is gone!"

"You must let the police know," she whispered; but before her sentence was concluded David had fled, to accost the next person he met and to narrate afresh the story of his misfortune.

When the matter became accredited the neighbours turned out in a body, to search every foot of the way David had traversed on the previous evening.

They lifted every board and tile in his house, they dug the garden three feet deep from end to end; they offered rewards to a third of its value for tidings of the missing treasure; but David Dale's fortune was never recovered. The money had vanished like fairy gold; but what was far worse, his contentment, his easy philosophy, and such intelligence as he had possessed had vanished with it. To repeat the story of his acquisition of wealth and its loss to everyone he met became the burden of David's life, till people grew impatient of it, and slipped out of the way to avoid him. There was talk after a year or two, of sending him to the workhouse, he had become such a helpless, distracted, poor creature. Then Jessie Trench went to the house he occupied and led him out by the hand, "He shall live with us," she said.

The case was reported by the neighbouring Press, and some of the medical publications took hold of it, and two eminent doctors found it sufficiently interesting to induce them to visit Grimpat and David Dale; and one said brain trouble was not infrequent after a sudden access of fortune, and the other said it was very unusual after such a lapse of time.

When old Peter Trench died and Jessie was left alone with poor David Dale, one and another discussed the propriety of their continuing to live together, and one amiable old woman with the best possible intentions suggested to Jessie that it might be expedient to marry David if she intended always to support him; whereat Jessie burst into a sudden storm of tears that effectually frightened her interlocutor and everyone else from ever broaching the subject again.

About four years after Peter Trench's death a very curious thing happened. Mother Murgatroyd was found sitting dead in her chair, with the black cat crouching at her feet, and on the table was a sheet of paper on which were traced in irregular capital letters the words—

"I want all I die possessed of to go to Jessie Trench for the maintaining of David Dale."

"All she died possessed of, the poor creature!" one and another said, thinking of that mysterious white half-crown; but when examination was made, over eleven hundred pounds in gold were found stuffed into her bedding and secreted here and there about the house.

Of course the will was not a legal document, but the local authorities decided to treat it as legal, and to carry out its behest: all of which set talk rife again and the people wondering if Mother Murgatroyd was responsible for David Dale's loss and insanity. But Jessie never admitted that to anyone, or even to her own heart. The fault was all hers, she thinks; and sometimes when David and she are alone together she kneels at his feet and says, "Forgive me," to which he invariably answers, stroking her abased grey head, "Ay surely, ay surely, good friend."

HOW THE OTHER HALF LIVES.

A RAILWAY MINSTREL.

OUR compartment on the Underground was suddenly rendered noisier than usual by the unmelodious, rasping twang of the banjo, then a harsh and melancholy voice grated forth a stave of a rattling comic song, whereof the jovial sentiment seemed but a sorry mockery of the sad-faced singer. It is, of course, a breach of the railway byelaw to sing and play in the company's carriages, but the statute is more honoured in the breach than in the observance, so nobody chides these humble minstrels. Some few, indeed, have tolerance or pity enough to bestow on them a copper or two, though no one cries "Encore."

At Baker Street everyone left the compartment except myself and the troubadour, who would likely have departed also in search of another audience, had I not taken measures to detain his untuneful excellency, who, considering a bird in the hand worth two in the bush, consented to remain and to tell me his life-story.

"You'd like to hear about my life, Sir," he began, in a quiet, gentlemanly tone that surprised me. "Well, I can't exactly say it's a very creditable story, either to myself or to anybody connected with me—though I've few enough friends alive now—but if you think it would be any good to hear it, I don't really mind if I do tell you something about myself." As he spoke, he strummed almost inaudibly on his battered old banjo. "You see," he went on, "I wasn't always like this, Sir, although you mightn't fancy it. I was born of well-to-do parents, no matter where, and had a good education—yes, I've been to college, and could quote you an ode of Horace if I cared to revive old memories that bring painful reflections with them when they come—no, I'll not show off my scholarship, it would only make me miserable; besides," he added, with a faint flash of humour, "my Latin might be shaky.

"I was intended for the law, but a natural aptitude for singing character-songs of the music-hall type led me to neglect my studies. I was in great request at social gatherings among my friends, and at last scarcely a night passed that I was not out somewhere exercising my peculiar gift. Bit by bit what had at first been merely a pastime became a passion, and I grew to hate the bare idea of being a lawyer—my voice, I thought, combined with my powers of mimicry, should suffice to bring me fortune without drudgery. I positively loathed the dreary routine of an attorney's office.

"Every night as I sang to my admiring friends I fancied I saw myself delighting thousands instead of a dozen or so of people in a suburban drawing-room. It is true the 'halls' were not then what they have since become; but even in my day—and I am not such an old man as I look—a popular artiste could make a very good thing of the business. So I sang and dreamed and aspired, leaving the law to take care of itself, which it did by refusing to admit me as one of its licensed practitioners. Yes, I failed in my examinations again and again, until my father refused to bear my expenses any longer, and told me to try my luck in the line of life that seemed to be so clearly my proper vocation.

"I know now that my father really intended to let me have my fling and then to stand by me again, when I should be cured of my whim by the failure which he felt sure would be my lot, but that was never in his power. After many futile applications I at length obtained an engagement in a small hall, where I achieved a measure of success, though not sufficient to satisfy my ambitions. Then I learned the bitter truth, that it is one thing to delight one's friends, but quite another to please the public.

"In a month's time I was weary and sick of the whole thing. But give in I would not. My second engagement was worse than my former one. I began to realise what being hard up meant, yet still I struggled on, resolutely refusing to

THOUGH NO ONE CRIES "ENCORE."

return home. It's hard to own oneself a fool. At last I was so far down, so miserable and disgusted, that I determined to ask my father to let me return to the office, were it only as a clerk, not as a law student; but, the thought arose, Will he take me back? for you must remember, I did not know that his intentions were really of the kindliest. So I hesitated.

"Just at that moment my luck turned. I got hold of a song that suited me down to the ground—it was a silly enough thing in all conscience—but it 'caught on,' as they say nowadays, and I became the rage. The chorus went like this." He hitched up his banjo as he spoke, and with some spark of youthful fire carolled the refrain—

"Oh! what are you going to do, young man?
Say, what are you going to do?
Oh! this is the sum of my desire—
I'm going to set the Thames on fire,
And educate the Zoo,
And educate the Zoo,
Old man,
Yes, educate the Zoo!

"For a time all went well, and I grew actually proud of the step I had taken—so proud, in fact, that I wrote my father an insolent letter, to which he returned a reply that should have broken my heart if I hadn't been the misguided fool I was. He said he was pleased that I was prosperous, though he could not feel gratified at my line of life. He warned me, however, that stage fortunes were of all others the most apt to take wings, and assured me that if ever luck went against me he was willing to take me home again.

"TUMMING MY CRAZY OLD BANJO."

The old fireside was dull without me, he wrote, for I should have told you, Sir, that my father and I lived alone together—I was an only child, and my mother had been dead many years. To that letter I returned no reply. My father's kindness irritated me. His suggestion that my popularity might desert me amounted, I fancied, to insult.

"Two years filled up the measure of my success. Then my voice broke. I had overstrained it on a night of mad hilarity when I led the house in full roar to do battle with one of my wildest choruses. You may imagine that a cracked voice is nothing to a singer of the kind I was, but my breakdown was terrible, I dared not face an audience.

"Rest did nothing for me; my slender funds—I had not been saving—melted away, and very soon I found myself on the brink of starvation. Then, my pride all broken, I wrote to my father and told of my plight.

"But ere that letter reached its destination my father was dead. Ruin had come upon him in a moment—as upon myself—and the shock had killed him. My former friends and admirers would not recognise me. True, I had in some measure lost caste by going on the stage, but there was a worse offence—I was heir only to a bankrupt estate. That was sin unpardonable.

"I slid down the ladder rung by rung. I was not dissolute. I did not drink. I was merely unfortunate. For a time I contrived to earn a bare pittance by teaching—I had fair qualifications—in the families of small tradesmen, but at last no one would engage me. Clothes won't last for ever.

"So here I am at five-and-thirty with the looks of a broken man of sixty, tumming my crazy old banjo and croaking with my crazy old voice at theatre-doors and in railway carriages to bring in a poor sixpence or two for bed and bite and sup. I've neither hope nor fear; all days are alike to me—the same grey stretch of weariness from dawn to dusk. I'm down—I can't get up again—and there's the end of it."

The train-wheels grided and shrieked themselves to rest at the next station. Then the strange man swung into another carriage, and for the rest of my journey I heard at intervals the cracked tones braying for daily bread. But I saw the wan face no more, neither that day nor at any other time.

J. D. SYMON.

FOR EVER.

By GILBERT BURGESS.

A GIRL sat in the twilight before a large fire that threw vivid lights and shadows across the room. Every now and then she glanced at a clock upon the mantelpiece, and at times she turned towards the windows. Half an hour passed, and the look of expectancy on her face became tinged with annoyance.

"How late Douglas is!" she said half aloud. "He promised to be here before five—ah!"

The exclamation was caused by a knock at the front door of the house. She rose and went instinctively to a looking-glass, and with a few hurried movements of her fingers arranged the curls upon her forehead; she smiled approbation at herself, and turned away. The door opened and a man came unannounced into the room, as would one who had the right of entry.

"At *last*, Douglas!" said the girl, with reproachful emphasis.

"I am sorry, Muriel," he answered as he kissed her lightly on the forehead. "I couldn't get here earlier."

"Come and sit down by the fire and tell me what you have been doing with yourself all day."

She drew him by the hand to the fireplace.

"Why, how cold you are! What's the matter with you, dear? You don't seem a bit glad to see me. Shall I ring the bell and have the lamps brought in? It will make the room seem cheerier."

"No, please don't," said Douglas Trench, with a shudder, which was quickly followed by a fit of coughing.

"If you don't take care of that cold, Douglas, you will be laid up, and then what will become of the great novel? Oh, look!" The girl went off at a mental tangent, and taking a heap of letters from a table near her, handed them to her companion. "Just look at all these invitations. Four balls week after next! And I hear the Mounteney-Smithsons and lots of other people are going to give dances."

"*Don't*, Muriel!"

"Why, Douglas?"

The look in his face startled her, and kneeling at the side of his chair she took his hands between hers.

"What has happened? You look as white as a ghost, and—you *must* tell me!"

"Oh!" he moaned, "it is cruel—cruel—Muriel," he stroked her hair caressingly; "you must be brave, dearest; I have bad news to tell you."

She rose up from her knees.

"You don't love me any more!"

"Don't say that, child," he answered in a strained voice. "Sit down and listen to me; don't look at me until I have finished."

She obeyed him wonderingly.

There were several moments of silence, broken only by the rhythmic ticking of the clock. The man looked steadfastly into the fire. Then he spoke in a low, strained voice.

"Muriel, for the past year I have been hoping against hope. You remember last winter, when my cough was so bad? It was much worse than I ever dared to tell you. One night a terrible thing happened."

"What do you mean, Douglas?"

"You know what hæmorrhage is?"

The girl put her hands before her eyes.

"It has happened not only once, but many times." He paused. "The spring came, and I grew better. The fog yesterday—I went to a specialist this afternoon—Muriel"—he stretched forth his hands to touch her with the indeterminate gesture of a blind man. "I—I can never marry you; I have no right to; it would be a crime. He said so."

The girl rose to her feet; there was horror in her eyes. Then, with a swift movement, she flung her arms around his neck.

"Douglas, I don't care — you *shall* marry me. I don't care—I love you—I can't give you up. You will get better, dear."

He pushed her gently from him.

"Don't make it harder for me," he said.

A fit of coughing seized him—a cough with a vague, muffled sound.

"But there is one thing I want to ask you. Some day, I know by instinct, you will marry Captain Denison."

"Oh, Douglas, how can you dare?" and the girl, bursting into tears, sank into a low chair at his side.

"I must go now, for it's getting dark, and"—with a brave effort at flippancy—"valuable invalids mustn't run risks, you know."

He went unsteadily towards the door.

Muriel followed him to help him on

KNEELING AT THE SIDE OF HIS CHAIR SHE TOOK HIS HANDS BETWEEN HERS.

"You will, Muriel. But will you wait until I am—until it is all over with me? I couldn't bear it—just now. It will be one winter, two winters, three winters perhaps—you can do that much for me?"

"I swear I will never marry anyone but you. I am yours for ever."

"For ever?" he repeated with a sad smile, as he looked out of the window.

with his coat; her face was tear-stained, and she sobbed as she wrapped a silk handkerchief round his throat. The handkerchief signified so much.

"I'll come to-morrow and tell you my plans," said Douglas. The door closed behind him, and the girl returned to the room which they had just left. She sat there for an hour; her grief seemed

greater than she could bear, yet beneath it all she felt a strange distrust of herself. She loved Douglas, of course, and she would be true to him at all costs, but——

"Oh! he will soon be well if he goes South for the winter," she cried aloud.

Her maid entered the room.

"Miss Muriel, it is time for you to dress."

"Am I going out, Ellison?"

"Lady Tredegar's to dinner, Miss, at eight o'clock."

Muriel, after a moment's pause, said, "I will wear my blue Watteau frock—you know the one I mean."

"Yes, Miss Muriel."

* * * *

In the same room, two years later, the girl sat with her mother. Between them was a table upon which were spread the elaborate paraphernalia of afternoon tea. Muriel, although she had lost the supreme fascination of girlish immaturity, had gained in actual beauty. There was something of the deer in her, something of the swan; her head was poised almost triumphantly upon her shoulders, and her figure—ever lithe and sinuous—was more harmonious in its lines and curves.

"Mother," she said, "what ought I to do?"

"My dear," replied Mrs. Grahame, "you know what *I* think about it, although *my* wishes never count for much in your eyes."

Mrs. Grahame was an extremely picturesque old lady, who, having been a great beauty in the spring of her life, clung to the remaining vestiges of her charms with desperate determination. Sables she loved, and gorgeous raiment, and, above all, she was of the world, infinitely worldly.

"My dear child," she continued, as she placed a lump of sugar in her tea-cup, "the whole thing lies in a nutshell." With Mrs. Grahame everything always did. "Here are you, beautiful, clever, and far better educated than ever *I* was, frittering away your life and prospects on account of a tiresome——"

"Mother!" said the girl reproachfully.

"Well, invalids *are* tiresome; you can say what you like, but they are. The idea of your treasuring up in your heart a romantic—ridiculous, *I* should call it—affection for a man who has eight toes in the grave, while there is Captain Denison, rich and good-looking, dying, simply *dying*, my dear, to marry you, is so preposterous to me that really I can hardly keep my temper."

Muriel was silent. During the past two years the thought had often crept into her mind, with insidious reiteration, that she was not honestly in love with Douglas. She hated anything that was maimed. She loved strength, manliness, the joy of life. Poor Douglas!—she could picture him in her mind's eye walking feebly, or being wheeled in a chair along the sea front at Mentone, where he was spending the winter. And she had promised that she would wait for him.

"It wasn't generous of him to ask me to do that," she thought.

Somebody knocked loudly at the front door of the house.

"Captain Denison," said Mrs. Grahame, with telepathic instinct. "My dear, I will leave you; but if he *should* say anything—you understand. You will take my advice?" And the old lady rustled briskly from the room.

There was a moment's interval.

"Captain Denison," said the servant, as he held the door open.

A tall, conventionally handsome man advanced briskly across the room to Muriel, with both hands outstretched.

"Muriel," he said, "I'm so jolly glad to see you. How are you, little woman? A little under the weather, eh?" He took her hands in his and looked into her face, which she in vain tried to turn away from him.

"Will you have some tea, Arthur?" she said simply.

"Bother tea!" he replied. "I want to talk seriously to you, Muriel."

They sat down, and Captain Denison, with the true soldierly disinclination for beating about the bush, commenced to talk in a strong, resolute voice.

"The fact of the matter is that the present state of affairs can't go on any longer. I love you, Muriel; I want you, and you *must* come to me. Your mother has told me all about that Trench fellow"—the girl drew in her breath sharply—"and though I think it is awfully loyal of you and all that, it is, after all, only a sentimental sort of business. He can't possibly live through the winter. I want you—will you marry me? The other night at that dinner party you seemed to care a little for me."

"It would kill Douglas," said the girl almost inaudibly.

"Why should he know anything about it? We could be married quite quietly, and we needn't send any stupid announcements to the papers; then, when he dies——"

"Arthur, please don't! He would know everything *then*."

"When he dies we can make the marriage public," he continued, without noticing her interruption.

Muriel's heart beat with accelerated action. The forcefulness of her companion dominated her: she admired him, he was so strong and determined—and she realised how different his nature was from that of Douglas. There had always been a certain weakness of character about the latter which, although it lent the charm of gentleness to his nature, she had at heart resented and almost despised. The Rubicon lay before her eyes. She was sorely tempted to cross the river—it was bridged over for her. For two minutes she was silent; then, with a sudden decisiveness that surprised herself, she said—

"Yes, Arthur, I think I love you enough. I will marry you."

"My darling!" he cried, as he sprang to his feet.

At that moment Mrs. Grahame entered the room. She had an instinct for hitting upon psychological moments. She realised the situation at a glance, and she deemed it fitting to hold the inevitable fragment of lace and cambric in readiness.

"Well, dear?" she interrogated.

"Captain Denison has asked me to marry him, and I have accepted him, mother."

Mrs. Grahame brushed away an invisible tear. "It is the dearest wish of my heart," she said, with some little emotion. And then the three fell to discussing plans and projects.

* * * *

One morning at breakfast, a week after Muriel had been married, she laid a letter, which she had just opened, upon the table with an exclamation of dismay.

"What's the matter, dear?" asked her husband from behind the *Times*.

"Read this," she replied, as she pushed the letter towards him.

Her husband glanced at the signature, frowned slightly, and proceeded to read aloud the letter, which had evidently been dictated—

Hôtel Bellevue, Mentone.

My dear Muriel,—The doctor tells me the end is very near. Will you come to me? Your mother will not refuse to bring you. I know you will keep your promise. DOUGLAS.

"What a deuce of a nuisance!" exclaimed Denison. "Of course, it is quite out of the question, but——"

"Arthur, I *must* go to him."

"Nonsense!" he replied sharply. "It would be too ridiculous. Hardacre lending us his place for our honeymoon, and we suddenly skipping away to the South of France, and—and all that, you know."

The girl looked at him piteously.

"I promised him——"

"You also promised him that you wouldn't marry anyone else."

Muriel shrank back in her chair.

"*You* shouldn't have said that, Arthur."

"I'm sorry; I was a brute."

He knitted his brows and drummed his fingers upon the table.

"After all," he said, half to himself, "Monte Carlo is not very far from Mentone, and the weather here is certainly beastly."

His wife looked at him anxiously.

"All right, Muriel, if you feel that you ought to go, we'll start as soon as possible. Let's see, we could go up to town this afternoon, and leave for Mentone to-morrow or the next day."

"It's very good and unselfish of you," said Muriel.

"It's an awful bore, all the same," was his laconic reply. But, nevertheless, he was thinking of the gambling-rooms at Monte Carlo, and in his imagination he could hear the subdued murmur of the players, and the chink of gold coins against the rake of the croupier.

Muriel and her husband started the next day for Mentone, and upon their arrival at the Riviera, Captain Denison's spirits rose under the combined influences of brilliant colour and sunshine.

They arrived at their hotel too late to see Douglas the same day, but the following morning, on calling at the Bellevue, they were informed by the Swiss hall-porter that the English gentleman was very ill, and the doctor had said that he did not expect to make many more visits upon him. Muriel's courage began to wane: she dreaded the interview, and she resented the irresistible impulse that had caused her to come. She stood for a moment irresolute, and then glanced at her husband, who, with unwonted quickness of perception, had divined the current of her thoughts.

"Brace up, little woman," he said, not unkindly, "you'd better get it over. Let's send upstairs and ask if you can see him."

And, turning to the servant, he added: "Find out if Mr. Trench can see Mrs.—I mean, Miss Grahame."

"Miss Grahame? Yes, Sir," replied the servant, and he departed with the alacrity

DOUGLAS WAS SITTING UPRIGHT WITH AN AWFUL EXPRESSION ON HIS FACE.

that is born of the bestowal of a ten-franc piece.

He returned in a few moments. "The nurse says Mademoiselle may come up, but she must not stay long."

They went upstairs, and when they were outside Douglas's room Denison whispered to his wife that he would wait for her in the passage way.

"And don't be too long, dear," he added.

Muriel went into the room.

She made a vague mental inventory of the scene. The curtains of the windows were partially drawn so that the blinding brilliancy of the sun might be lessened. She noticed a faint scent of violets, and there was *something* in the bed which stirred faintly as the door opened. A weak voice called her name, and she went softly to the bedside. A feeling of repulsion crept over her, but she steeled her

nerves, and touched the thin wasted hand that rested upon the coverlet.

"I knew you would come," said the voice.

Muriel looked down at Douglas's face; he was so terribly changed that she shuddered involuntarily; but before she had time to speak to him a fit of coughing seized him. His fingers clutched at the counterpane; there was a strange sound in his throat, and a stranger look in his eyes. The struggle ceased suddenly, and his head fell back on the pillow. Muriel had never before been in the presence of death, and her overwrought nerves made her burst into tears. The door opened and her husband entered the room quietly. Instinctively she turned to him, and in a moment she was sobbing in his arms.

"Don't give way so, child," he said. He held her close to him and drew her towards the window, while he tried to think of consolatory platitudes.

There was a movement on the bed, and they turned swiftly. Douglas was sitting upright with an awful expression on his face. His lips moved impotently for some seconds, as though he had lost the power of speech.

Suddenly one word rang through the room—

"*Wanton!*"

And then the soul of Douglas Trench crossed the dark river. Muriel disengaged herself from her husband's embrace.

"Oh, God!" she cried, as the tears rained down her face, "we might have waited! I promised, I promised . . . and now *he* is a barrier between us."

Denison looked out over the blue waters. In the distance he fancied that the island of Corsica was faintly visible, and in the foreground boats with brightly coloured sails danced upon the ripples of the sea.

"I'll make the little woman lie down," he thought, "and I'll run over to Monte this afternoon for an hour or two."

You say you love me, nay, can swear it too:
But stay, Sir, 'twill not do.
I know you keep your oaths
Just as you wear your clothes,
While new and fresh in fashion;
But once grown old,
You lay them by,
Forgot like words you speak in passion.
I'll not believe you, I.

SANDRINGHAM HALL.

A PEEP AT SANDRINGHAM.

By CONSTANCE BEERBOHM.

OF all royal residences, Sandringham is the most home-like and cosy. Not long ago I paid my first visit to the Hall, and was altogether charmed with it. Picture to yourself a long, low, red pile of buildings, standing in the midst of beautifully kept gardens, green with flowering shrubs, and gay with every flower that blows. What struck me most was the un-English look of the whole place. You might imagine yourself at Copenhagen, at Homburg, or Avranches—anywhere but in Norfolk. The Prince and Princess dislike dinginess above all things, and have no "feeling" for the antique; therefore, the face of Sandringham Hall is made to shine like a new pin, and wherever you may go in the grounds you see little groups of work-people busily repainting the gates here, or touching up the gold of a weather-cock there, "and what not and what not." In the grounds, this way or that, you might imagine yourself in the gardens of a foreign casino. The place is essentially one where you may spend "a happy day." Indeed, I never saw so many amusements as are here provided. What with American bowling alleys, lawn-tennis grounds, and model dairies, pretty and picturesque as a brand-new toy from Crêmer's in Regent Street, you never need be dull out of doors. Once upon a time there was a bear-pit in the garden, and visitors to the house vastly enjoyed themselves throwing buns and other delicacies to Mr. and Mrs. Bruin; but, for some reason, the Prince had the pit done away with.

FROM WOLFERTON TO SANDRINGHAM: UP THE HILL.

Walking quietly along in the grounds that fine September afternoon, I was confronted with a monster, not a real live one, but a huge Indian god of stone, seated beneath a gorgeously painted canopy, which the Prince had brought

EAST FRONT AND PRINCIPAL ENTRANCE, SANDRINGHAM.

home with him from his travels in the East. The monster surveys the whole world—not unkindly—from his eminence, and casts a vacant but smiling eye on the long line of trees stretching from the outer gates right up to the house itself, and which have been planted by distinguished visitors staying from time to time at Sandringham. Here is a fir-tree planted by the King of Greece, here another by the Dowager Duchess of Sutherland. Indeed, I don't know who has *not* planted a tree at Sandringham!

Before going indoors, I paid a visit to the little church, St. Mary Magdalene, on the estate. Such a pretty church it is, and so evidently cared for by loving hands. Nobody at Sandringham is allowed to miss church on Sunday morning, and the Princess positively loves both church and churchyard. One of the most noticeable things in the building is a beautiful lectern placed there by the Princess as a thank-offering for the recovery of the Prince from his attack of typhoid, now many years ago. The lectern bears the inscription: "To the glory of God, a thank-offering for His mercy; 14th day of December, 1871. When I was in trouble I called upon the Lord and He heard me." Within the chancel there are monuments to the Emperor Frederick, the late Duke of Clarence, the Duke of Albany, and the Princess Alice. In the churchyard itself, a simple cross marks the grave of the groom who was taken ill at the same time as the Prince and succumbed. "The one taken and the other left" is written on the stone. A plainer stone stands at the head of the grave of the third son of the Prince and Princess, with the words, "Suffer little children to come unto me."

The stables of the Prince are alone worth a journey down to Norfolk to

PAST THE PRIVATE DRIVE, SANDRINGHAM.

see. The building, painted white and blue, is, of course, constructed on the most approved principles. The Princess rarely spends a day without making a morning call on her ponies, and comes, too, laden with apples, carrots, sugar, and bread for their benefit. The ponies reserved for her four-in-hand are particularly fascinating, and before I forget their names, here they are: "Huffy," "Puffy," "Beans," "Bene." In the saddle-room, which is full to overflowing with sets of harness (I may mention that the Prince and Princess have a taste for brown harness), are many mementoes of trainers and jockeys, and an amusing caricature of the Prince of Wales surrounded by his friends at the race-meeting at Newmarket is framed and hung upon the wall.

As for the carriages, I could not count them! Besides the *char-à-banc*, given by the Duke of Sutherland to the Prince, and called the Gold Pie Brake, for what reason I do not know, there is a wondrous yellow-painted buggy frequently driven by the Prince, a Hungarian sledge the most luxurious possible, padded and lined with rose-coloured cloth, Russian sledges, Norwegian carrioles, Norfolk carts, and traps of every possible description.

Before leaving the grounds I must not forget the lovely little dairy—the Princess's own, where she and her daughters usually repair to tea when the weather is fine; or the kennels, with room for about eighty dogs, all beautifully kept, and where all pets, excepting the toy-terriers, are lodged in their master's or mistress's absence.

SANDRINGHAM CHURCH, NORFOLK.

Within doors the scene is one of supreme cosiness. It is a regular English home, and the life spent there is essentially English. As for the furniture, it is most luxurious, and needs, I think, no further description. Wherever you may go, upstairs or downstairs or in my lady's chamber, is a profusion of palms, and

during the Prince and Princess's stay at the Hall the conservatories are just ransacked. The house appears a perfect bower of flowers, for the Princess wills it so.

Close by the conservatory you find the Princess's own private sitting-room, and a few doors off the Prince's writing-room. And there is—happy thought!—a regular little post-office in the house, where stamps and money-orders, etc., may be bought, and telegrams sent.

No more generous landlord than the Prince can be found throughout the length and breadth of England. He and his gentle Princess are simply adored round about their Norfolk home, and deservedly, for they make their people's troubles their own, and are never known to forget a kindly face, however humble.

THE MARE "STAR OF DENMARK" AND FOAL "DAGMAR."

Belonging to the Princess of Wales.

A BROKEN TRYST.

By MRS. COMYNS CARR.

"LOR', yes, 'Melia's off to the 'op-pickin' again, sure enough," grumbled a shrivelled and careworn little woman, who stood bent over an ironing-board just inside a poor cottage on the brow of the hill. "Though, as I says to her, it 'd be more worth my while for ye to stay at home to-day and help me with this washin', for it 's more than one pair of hands can do to get all them shirts ready to go 'ome to the Priory to-night."

"Why, ye ought to make that girl mind ye better, Mrs. Shaw, indeed ye ought," declared the neighbour to whom this feeble complaint was addressed, and who stood poised on the threshold, twisting the pinch of starch that she had come to borrow in a paper, and throwing back her advice as she prepared to descend the steps into the road.

"Well, it don't seem much use talkin' to girls nowadays," moaned the mother helplessly. "They're all so mighty sure they know all about it. In my time it weren't considered respectable for a young woman to go 'op-pickin' all by 'erself like that; but, Lor', things is all changed since I were young."

"Maybe they ain't so much changed as you think for, 'Liza Shaw," nodded the neighbour—Martha Jones by name—sententiously. "There's some as say she's too much with the men, is your daughter; there's some as says as she's too fond o' feathers and fashions and sich-like; and there's some as can chaff her about them dark lanes of a summer night."

Mrs. Shaw flushed all over her poor wrinkled, sallow face as she put down one iron and took up another with a trembling hand, holding it to her cheek to test the heat.

"I should like to know who they can be, then," said she with a note of righteous indignation in her quivering voice. "I never did 'old with them dark lanes, and 'Melia knows it; but when it comes to be'aving—well, there, 'Melia may be a bit light-'earted—I don't say she's not—but she comes o' respectable folk, and none can say contrairy to that."

"Oh, Lor' bless you, yes; no offence, I'm sure," declared Martha Jones, retreating. "Girls will be girls, so I say. But I 'd make her do a bit at them shirts to-night. 'Tis but fair to you."

She nodded in an offhand, friendly way as she shambled down the rough brick steps to the road—the matter dismissed from her mind. But the poor widow drew many a laboured sigh from her aching breast as the iron passed quickly or slowly over the white linen; and when she stepped to the threshold now and then to look to the children playing in the road there was more than the usual fret of work unfinished and worry to come on her weary face, and Martha Jones's friendly advice was the cause.

Meanwhile, in the sun-steeped hop-gardens down the hill towards the sea, 'Melia was taking her fill of health and fun.

It was very hot; beyond the waste of yellow turf—relieved by the richer brown of nodding grasses at seedtime, and by the green of rushes along the sides of brackish dykes, all of which went to form the mellow plain between the village on the hill and the ocean in the distance—blue waves rippled in the sunlight, the shallow water farther out streaked with purple shadows till a yellow dash in the distance told of scarce covered sands.

She was a tall, powerful, dark girl, in every particular opposite to the fragile woman over the ironing-board. Some strain of gipsy blood in the unknown past must have bred those deep, dark eyes and kindled the quick flash that pride, anger, or pleasure would stir in their brown softness. And in her gait, too, and her movements there was a fullness and a freedom foreign to the less well-developed persons of most of her companions. Was it any wonder that the lads liked her, that her merry spirit and her hearty ways kept them good-tempered and civil, when a gloomy face would sour the best of them—that 'Melia Shaw was a favourite with every male creature, and not quite so popular with her own sex?

[illegible] she seemed [illegible] [illegible] person was a hard-featured woman of about forty, who was cordially hated in the field because she never looked up from her work, but picked more poles in an hour than anybody else to right or left of her.

[illegible] WITH THE MEN, IS YOUR DAUGHTER."

[illegible] proportion [illegible] of [illegible] short space of time.

And to-day someone had ventured to interfere with Mena, and was "catching it hot" in return. The imprudent

"Ye [illegible] get much out o' the lads yerself seemingly when [illegible] was young, Miss Crutch," the girl was retorting with a merry toss of her black head. "Maybe we young 'uns know a way worth two o' that nowadays."

And there was a roar of laughter in the field at her words, for Miss Crutch was a single woman.

"Yer pore mother wouldn't be pleased to 'ear ye speak so, anyway," remarked the spinster severely.

"You leave my mother alone," retorted 'Melia, with one of those quick flashes from her bright eyes. "*She* knowed her way about, anyway."

Another laugh around, but Miss Crutch said sourly, "Ay, pore soul, much of a way *she* cut out for herself! A widder in the prime o' life wi' a pack of ungrateful children to moil and slave for. No wonder she 's broke and old afore her time."

"Who says as they're ungrateful?" said 'Melia.

"Them as sees the eldest on 'em racin' round to please 'erself instead of 'elpin' her," retorted the old maid.

"Well, she don't want *your* 'elp to mind 'em anyway," giggled the girl, turning to empty her pocketful of hops into the bin and meeting as she did so the grave eyes of a thick-set man of quiet aspect who was lifting fresh poles for the pickers.

She lowered her own that were not in the habit of falling before anyone's gaze, and her laugh was less confident as she added: "There 's earnin' as well as 'elpin', ye see."

"Oh, I say, 'ow much o' your earnin's goes 'ome, eh, 'Melia?" sneered a fat girl hard by; but her mouth was stopped by a young fellow who brushed past her quickly, and, stooping over 'Melia, pulled a hop-pole out of the ground for her that was trying even her strength, and laid it across for her ready to pick. The elder man, who was going on steadily with his own work, smiled a little, and the girl who had spoken cried out, "Lor! it ain't everyone of us gets *that* done for us!"

'Melia looked a little conscious as she said, "Ye 'adn't no call to do it, thank ye, Mr. Farr. Mr. Wilkins 'ere"—nodding towards the other man—"lays 'em ready for us."

But she looked pleased as any girl would have looked, and blushed a bit under her brown skin at something the fellow said to her in an undertone. The girls around sniggered and whispered together, but the next minute 'Melia threw her jokes and laughter around her in just the same wholesale and indiscriminate manner as usual, and the lads took heart of grace again and gathered round her—each confident that he could oust the stranger from her favour—and she was, as always, the centre of life and fun and banter. Only he whom she had called Mr. Wilkins held aloof, and went on steadily with his work without paying her any attention, without even laying the poles as near to her hand as he did to that of many another girl, and she—strange to say—never flung him even one of her lightly casual words, never appealed to him for his opinion, as she laughingly did to so many others.

"A good 'usband?" she was saying now with her merriest manner. "Well, now, I wonder what sort that 'd be? Some tell ye one thing and some another, till ye don't know what to believe, 'pon my word ye don't. 'Ere's Johnnie says he 'll give me every blessed thing I can want; but Lor' bless me, 'ow can I tell what I shall want? A proper man 'd find out for ye, and give it ye into the bargain!"

The laugh went round louder than ever at this, and Johnnie declared he would find out fast enough, but he was told that as he had never made a good shot at her tastes yet she wasn't likely to have any confidence in him for the future, and Johnnie, crestfallen, fell into the rear.

"Nay," continued she, "there 's some as 'll tell ye a woman's happiest when the man leads her a devil's life; but there, I say it's according to taste again, and 'ow am I to know till I've tried? No, no, there 's many a lad's good for a day's larking that 'd never do to settle down with! So ye may all take it I mean to lark around a bit more yet awhile, and there 's no tellin' at all who I shall take in the end."

"I wouldn't wait too long, 'Melia. Ye mightn't get asked so often as you think for," sneered the fat girl again; and 'Melia — ready, as usual — said that of course there was that danger to fear, but that she would take her chance all the same. And at that the lads laughed so vexatiously loud that the girls were vexed and bit their lips. By all of which it is to be surmised that, fond as 'Melia was of frolic and flattery, she had never given even the smallest portion of herself away, thus far, and, as her poor mother had proudly said of her, was no more than a bit light-hearted. Only to-day, for the first time, she had not been quite honest with herself, and if she had chosen to confess it, *did* know who she would take in the end—provided he asked her!

But there was the rub. He had not yet asked her. There had been larking enough, but nothing serious; and though you might possibly know how far you dared go with a lad of your own village whom you had known all your life, you did not feel

quite so sure with a London chap, for the ways of London chaps were cruel and uncertain, and everybody said you must needs beware of them if you did not want to be led astray; and, though 'Melia wanted as much fun as she could get, she had no intention of being led astray.

'MELIA.

So, if the truth were known, 'Melia was rather cross with herself than otherwise that it should just happen to be this London chap who had made her feel something that she had never somehow felt for any lad before. She didn't recognise it to herself as love, and she had scorned to acknowledge it at first, but she knew very well now in the depths of her heart that it was stronger than her will, and that she would take that Mr. Farr fast enough if he were to ask her. What was it in him that was making a fool of her? There was many a better-looking man among her own acquaintance, and he had not even any of the dash that one was wont to expect in one bred in the great world; while as for his condition in life, it was absolutely dark to her, and she had always supposed she would not sell her universally acknowledged charms but to a high bidder.

So 'Melia was ashamed of herself when—as the hoppers wandered up the hill again that day at the sunsetting—she found herself loitering behind with the chap from London, and actually consenting to a tryst for that very night under the lea of the down beneath the windmill—a moonlight tryst with a stranger, a thing that she had

never done in her life before—gadabout as she too truly was, though not in the sense in which the neighbours hinted it. Yes, 'Melia was ashamed of herself, but she was going to do it all the same! So, of course, she was none the better pleased when Mr. Wilkins—meeting her on the meadow's brow after she had parted from her new swain—said, speaking to her for the first time that day, "'Melia Shaw, there's Miss Crutch waitin' for ye round by the oast-house. She's got a word to say to ye afore ye goes home."

He spoke very seriously, looking her straight in the eyes as he had done once before that day in the hop-field. There was nothing to take offence at either in the words or the look; yet 'Melia fired up. Her conscience was sore, and it did her good to fly out at somebody, and so she made sure that the "word" that was going to be said was a word of warning about that which she knew she was doing amiss.

"I haven't got nothing to say to Miss Crutch," cried she quickly. "She's a nasty old backbitin' crosspatch, and I ain't a-goin' to take nothin' from *'er*."

Still the man looked at her quietly.

"Do you know what 'tis she's got to say to ye?" asked he.

"I can make a good guess at it," said she, with a toss of her head and a short laugh. "Miss Crutch never got no courtin' 'erself, and she don't like them as do."

"There's courtin' and courtin'," began Wilkins in a low voice, "and there's a time for everythin'——" but she interrupted him passionately.

"There's folks as thinks a girl must needs be a born fool if she thinks fit to take her own way," cried she fiercely, but there was a quiver as of tears in her voice. "But, Lor' bless me, it's yourself ye've got to choose for, and ye must choose your own—come what may."

"Ay, that may be," echoed the man, and she was far too preoccupied to note the wistful way in which he said it. "But young maids can't allers be 'spected to know all the ways o' this wicked world. We've knowed ye a little 'un, ye see, and we don't want ye to come to no 'arm."

"'Arm!" exclaimed 'Melia impetuously, firing up at once; but he stopped her.

"Well, anyways," he said quietly, "ye won't be thinkin' o' courtin' just now? 'Tain't about that as Miss Crutch was wantin' to speak with ye."

"What then?" answered she moodily, as was not her wont.

"Maybe ye had best go up and see," said he. But as she still stood still, with ruffled brow, uneasily twisting a piece of grass round her fingers, and as though meditating further speech, he added gently, "Yer mother's sick."

The change was instantaneous. She did not say a word, but she flashed a quick, frightened look at him, and turned on her heel and fled. He looked after her pitifully as her tall figure flitted down the lane beside the wind-twisted pine-trees, behind whose red trunks the sun was setting in a sea of crimson beyond the purple downs. He watched to see if she would look for Miss Crutch, but she passed the oast-house by on her right, and ran straight on down the lane till she came to the turning that led to her home.

* * * *

The moonlight fell into that lane the same night as the clock of the old Abbey struck its nine wavering strokes, fell so full upon it that the shadow of the pines lay hard and black upon its whiteness, and that the figure of a man sauntering leisurely along between its low stone walls was conspicuous as in broad daylight. He had come up from the camp in the marshland below, where the fires of those "hoppers" who were not villagers burned brightly in the still night; he left the oast-houses on his left, and before he came to the farm on the right he vaulted the low paling and made off across the down to the windmill. He was not an inhabitant or he would have known that that was not the shortest way from the plain to his destination. And there—on the slopes under the great spreading arms of the mill, with the dykes wandering rippleless across the plain below, like winding streams of molten metal in the moonlight — this man waited awhile patiently. He was not used to waiting, and the scene before him engrossed him but little, so that when the ashes of his pipe had burned themselves out and the moon was riding high in the heavens, he grew weary of the tryst, and slowly but surely incensed against the girl who had broken it. He was no beauty—many even said that he was an ugly chap—but he knew that he always got his way with women, and not infrequently even with men, and he never troubled himself to wonder why, and would have been very much surprised if he had been told that it was because folk were in a certain sense afraid of him—afraid not of his strength but of his

selfishness—of the selfishness that always managed to take that for which it had no intention of paying.

It was the first time he remembered being baulked of what he had intended to get, and his fury grew as the minutes sped past. He ground out a fierce oath from between the white teeth that were the most conspicuous thing in his face, and turned back across the down. The "public" lay but a little way down the road to the village. He could soon forget 'Melia Shaw, and she should repent bitterly of her folly.

Was 'Melia repenting already, and was it really of her folly that she was repenting—of the folly of her wild and misguided craving? Or was she mourning the broken tryst that it was now too late to keep?

Who can tell? Anyway, a duty had fallen across her path, so plain and strong that she saw nothing else for the moment; for on the bed in the corner of the little cottage on the brow of the hill Widow Shaw lay motionless, speechless—struck down in the midst of her work—the soul only alive still, and eager as it looked forth, piteous and beseeching, from the weary grey eyes.

"It's them shirts she's frettin' over," said the neighbour, Martha Jones, standing at the foot of the bed as 'Melia rushed in, white and scared. "Ye didn't ought to have left her to do it all. But it's jest like what ye're always after."

But Miss Crutch in the doorway, throwing a scornful glance at the girl, tossed her head.

"Shirts," echoed she with a laugh, "shirts, indeed! A pore mother has got somethin' worse than shirts to think about when she knows her daughter's a-carryin' on with good-for-nothing chaps as 'aven't the fear o' God so much as in their backbone. No wonder the Lord 'ave stricken 'er!"

"Hush, now, do there!" cried a kindlier woman who had risen from beside the bed, "ye'll drive the poor lass crazy. The doctor says as she'll get over it this time, dear," added she to 'Melia, "but she's got to be kep' quiet, and he'll call again presently."

The girl had thrown herself on the bed, the younger children, who were standing huddled together in a corner, clinging on to her skirts. At the words she leapt to her feet.

"To be kep' quiet!" echoed she fiercely, "Then clear out o' here all of yer, if you please. I'll see as she's kep' quiet."

The women quailed before her and made for the door, grumbling; all but she who had spoken last, on whose arm 'Melia laid a detaining hand. Then she threw herself once more on the bed.

"Lord! to think they must needs prate like that just now!" moaned she. "And there ain't no truth in it neither. No, mother, no, I ain't a-carryin' on with no chap, I ain't. And I'm sorry I didn't do the shirts for ye, I am. But they'll all go 'ome to-night, same as if you was well—I swear they will, mother! Oh, Lord! she won't speak to me—not a word! Whatever is it? Whatever shall I do?"

No, the mother could not speak, but the tired eyes grew quiet and drooped presently in sleep, and there were tears in the black eyes of the daughter as she gazed on her; and the neighbour, busying herself now about the supper and the children, cried as she answered.

"She *can't* speak to ye, 'Melia," said she. "She's 'ad a stroke. But she won't die this time. They often lives years arter the first, only they can't never do no work again. Ye'll 'ave to work for the lot. It's 'ard on ye, dear, but ye've 'ad yer turn."

And as she sat through the silent night, watching tenderly over the mother whom she had neglected, and who had so bravely toiled for her and so proudly defended her, 'Melia looked her future quietly in the face.

Yes; she would have to work for the lot. There would be no more larking. Would there be no more love-making either? Would she never find that out which she had not even desired to know till of late, which she had been so nearly finding out to-night? The sound common-sense of her peasant nature told her that it was more than likely. How many men would care to saddle themselves with a bed-ridden mother and a parcel of brats?

Was 'Melia repenting as he had said she should repent—repenting that broken tryst that she knew in her heart she should never, never keep? All her life she had always had what she wanted. But she had never wanted anything as she wanted the love of this one man, who was a stranger to her, and who was even now tramping away from her, miles away already along the dusty road that led to the nearest town.

* * * *

Every year when the harvest moon drew near the hoppers gathered into the camp beneath the hill, and made their fires

"SHE 'S GOT TO BE KEP' QUIET."

beside the straw huts in the hollow, and every year the picking went on busily in the fields; but there were some folk who said that there never was such a merry "hopping" as there had been that year—for 'Melia never got time to go back to it.

She worked hard to keep the laundry work together, and she did it, though there were folk enough that said she would never succeed. One by one the children grew up, and were put to service or to a trade, and at last the mother was laid to rest in the graveyard, and 'Melia was left with only one of her brood at her heels.

It had been a hard fight, and, save for one hand that had often been stretched out for her in the dark and unknown to herself—she had fought it unaided.

There had been no time, as she had guessed, for larking, or trysting, or love-making. And it was in a very quiet spirit that one autumn Sabbath, when the hops were all in, 'Melia Shaw walked to church with one Bill Wilkins, and said a gentle and quite untremulous "Yes" to the old question that is for ever being asked and answered in so many and varied moods.

A SUPERSTITION OF THE MONTH OF APRIL.

On the morning of St. Mark's Day, if one looks at the ashes left overnight and finds a footprint there, a death will occur in the house during the ensuing year.

THE TAXIDERMIST AT WORK.

See "A Country Taxidermist."

WE had been spending a couple of months on the western coast of Scotland, far from the haunts of men, in the purest, most exhilarating air, and amid the wildest and most romantic scenery.

Occasionally when looking inland across a stretch of heathery moorland we descried far off adown the misty ravine the branching antlers of some "monarch of the glen," while high above us against the lowering clouds, eagle or peregrine sailed in superb circles out over the sea without any apparent movement of its broad wings.

In this paradise of the bird-collector we were continually surrounded by thousands of birds winging their way from the spray-beaten cliffs, and filling the air with their shrill, plaintive cries, distinctly audible above the blusterous tempest and roaring surge of that iron-bound coast.

Here we witnessed at close quarters and for the first time in their natural surroundings the beautifully rounded forms and majestic flight of many of the larger and more uncommon gulls, and were able to compare their slow and languid movements on the wing with the rapid, twinkling, arrow-like flight of the oyster-catchers and other members of the same family.

So many different species of these charming denizens of sea and rock confronted us within easy reach that we often lost the opportunity of securing a specimen from sheer excitement and indecision as to which particular bird we ought to select. Too often, it is to be feared, was our temptation too strong to acknowledge the gentle spirit of Grahame's beautiful lines—

> Scare, if ye will, his timid wing away,
> But, oh! let not the leaden viewless shower
> Volleyed from flashing tube arrest his flight,
> And fill his tuneful gasping bill with blood—

and more specimens fell to our guns than we really required for our small collection of preserved British birds.

Often when ensconced in our rocky ambush, flocks of feathered mariners would drift low along the shore, over our heads, and for a moment the jagged outline of pointed wing and delicately white underparts would gleam brightly from the dark and stormy cloud, the next instant to vanish as quickly as they had appeared, their weird cries borne back upon the wind—

> Wild as the scream of the curlew,

a few splendid specimens of which bird we were fortunate enough to obtain, together with many of the rarer marine ducks, and several of the smaller kinds of those elegant little wanderers of the wave, the terns, or "sea-swallows." These, with quite a number of the different slender

little plovers, and various species of sand-pipers made up a most respectable and interesting addition to our collection.

Our time was now drawing to a close, and we were beginning to feel solicitous

ENTRANCE TO THE STUDIO.

for the satisfactory preservation of the precious souvenirs of that never-to-be-forgotten jaunt, spent with Nature in all her pristine beauty, amid sights and sounds to us the most enchanting. Upon broaching this question to our host the evening before our departure from Scotland, he advised our taking a southerly pilgrimage to that town where great Shakspere's heart first beat. Here fortune favoured us, for we fell in with a genius in whose studios we found abundant proofs to assure us that our highly prized specimens, under the magic of his touch, would wear again the witchery of pose and outline which charmed us in the wilds.

This faithful interpreter of nature placed before us specimens instinct with life, the fidelity so close as to make us think they surely breathed. Action was indicated with such truth that it seemed as if again—

> The antler'd monarch of the waste
>
> . . . .
>
> Toss'd his beam'd frontlet to the sky,

with eye, ear, and nostril all alert, lip, muscle, and vein as full, softly rounded, and truthfully proportioned as in life. Never before had we seen the poetry of nature reproduced with such consummate artistic skill and fidelity.

Unhesitatingly shown the *modus operandi* adopted to produce these pleasing results, we learned that the means employed in mounting the heads of the larger animals partook to a great extent of the sculptor's art, and required an accurate anatomical knowledge largely gained from the close observation and study of the living animal both in confinement and in its natural state.

In the course of a short conversation this artist informed us that after an experience of over twenty years he has arrived at what he considers to be the only way of faithfully rendering the anatomy and characteristic features so beautifully developed in the head of a stag.

In the first place, then, after removal of the skin and flesh, together with that part of the top of the skull carrying the antlers, the skull is cleaned and is then ready to receive the clay, which is modelled upon it until the original shape and proportions of the flesh, muscles, cartilages, etc., are obtained. It is now necessary to see that the skin fits over this clay-covered skull as in life, and having by this means gauged the correctness of the latter, the skin is lifted from it and a plaster cast taken of the model. This casting in its turn requires careful treatment, for although it is a counterpart of the clay-covered skull, a large amount of skilful carving of the hard plaster is necessary in order still further to accentuate and develop the salient features originally modelled. More particularly is this needful with regard to the channel between the lips, the nostrils, and the glandular cavity at the inner corner of each eye, all of which must possess the depth and appearance of beautiful mobility so strongly characteristic of the animal. The antlers are now fixed to the cast, a matter quickly accomplished by scooping out a depression at the upper part of the cast to receive the connecting strip of skull from which they spring, around and behind which plaster of Paris is then poured and allowed to flow into the large cavity at the back of the cast.

Perhaps one of the most difficult operations now presents itself in the fixing of the head to the neck so as to give the whole an easy graceful toss (as seen in Fig. 1). To attain this desired effect, great judgment has to be exercised in determining with precision not only the arrangement of the head and neck with respect to each other, but also in securing the proper outward and upward sweep of the neck, the large muscles of which, we learned, are replaced in bulk by peat (chosen for its lightness) covered with plaster of Paris. At this point a great deal of the "life" and expression so essential to the finished trophy depends upon a correct estimate of certain subtle lines and "twists" governing the pose; the choice of which involves the close consideration of a complexity of angles. We were, however, informed that in many cases the attainment of these pleasing results is completely frustrated at the outset by the limited length of the skin of the neck, which the gillies, as a rule, have a thoughtless knack of cutting off too short. This is a fatal mistake, and makes it quite impossible to get the desired pose of the head without bringing the antlers into contact with the wall from which the head depends.

At this stage was amply demonstrated to us the necessity of paring from the skin all traces of superfluous flesh, etc., adhering to it; and indeed the skin is rendered as thin as possible, while the greatest care has to be taken to avoid perforation of the outer surface. Although this operation is mechanical, it is nevertheless attended with difficulty. Before placing the skin upon the model the latter is coated with an adhesive substance, so that the skin shall fit closely down upon the inequalities, and show the smallest anatomical details in their natural position and characteristic action. The skin, being now finally drawn over the head, is carefully pressed into place; and the ease and exactness with which it accommodates itself to the conformation of the model fully bear out the soundness and artistic value of the novel methods here employed. The foregoing remarks are particularly applicable with respect to the nostrils, the outer edges of which, in the living animal, describe compound curves of great beauty, and mark the boundary line along which the short hair of the face gives place to the inner pinky flesh-coloured skin. This feature, perhaps more than any other in a preserved head, at once betrays the clumsy handling and inartistic treatment of the ordinary taxidermist, for the least deviation of outline immediately displaces the dividing line above referred to, and is responsible for the widespread distortion so glaringly apparent in all the mounted heads we had hitherto seen. It was, therefore, with peculiar pleasure that we noted the perfect success of this admirable method in maintaining a strict adherence to nature's lines. As the skin under these circumstances suffers no undue tightness in one place and looseness in another, it follows that the hair is undisturbed, and retains all its soft and natural appearance.

To prevent contraction of the skin when drying a number of pieces of cork are next fixed with needle-points (as in Fig. 2) upon various parts of the head, but chiefly where depressions occur, from which the skin might otherwise slightly rise in the course of drying.

Another item which largely contributes to the general lifelike effect attained under this treatment consists in the faithful imitation of the living eye, used in place of the expressionless circular and button-like article ordinarily adopted, which is here altogether discarded. Those familiar with the appearance of the red

A STAG'S HEAD AS FIRST RECEIVED.

deer know that its large expressive eyes appear to be oval, and that an elongated oval is the actual shape of the deeply dark blue pupil, surrounded by an iris of various changeful shades of sober tints. By using

specially made concave glasses of oval form, which our artistic friend paints on the inside to imitate exactly the colour and markings of the real eye, all the deep, liquid, and essentially deer-like expression is preserved.

In recent years the deerstalking season has brought an ever-increasing number of heads to these studios, among them many "royals" and several heads carrying fourteen points and upwards. Numbers of

Fig. 1. A Stage in the Fixing of the Head to the Neck.
Fig. 2.—Pieces of Cork affixed to prevent Contraction of the Skin.

these magnificent trophies now adorn the walls of the first homes in the kingdom, and many a noble stag again looks down with startled interest upon those to whom it once resigned—

The graceful honours of its head.

Our Illustration, taken from a photograph, of a head mounted by our friend for H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, by whom the stag was shot in Balmoral deer forest, shows a peculiar and unusual growth of antlers.

That the new method we have described is appreciated was clearly apparent to us by the mass of antlers we were shown belonging to heads in course of being set up at the time of our visit; in addition to which we also saw trophies which had come in from all parts of the globe, including heads of bison, buffalo, elk, wapiti, water-buck, wild sheep, tigers, leopards, lynx, etc., all of which, of course, were dealt with in the manner we have endeavoured to explain.

Turning from these we were introduced to the taxidermist's talented son, who was setting up a peregrine falcon as depicted in our sketch; and in this instance we were much interested in noting the skilful application of many little touches which would give life and "go" to the finished specimen.

Among a large and varied collection of beautifully mounted British and foreign birds, one group which impressed us as being intensely dramatic and real consisted of a golden eagle attacking a roe deer, an Illustration of which we give from a photograph. This eagle was an exceedingly fine specimen (a female), measuring over seven feet from tip to tip of wings. The eyes of this grand bird, and those of some perfect specimens of the eagle owl near by, were so intensely expressive that we were puzzled to know how the effect could have been obtained, but on closer examination found the secret to lie not so much in the eyes themselves as in the preservation of the overhanging brow, manipulation of the eyelids, and pose of the head. In all birds of prey there exists a projecting bony plate or eyebrow (more particularly pronounced in the larger species), admirably adapted for shading the eyes of diurnal birds when pursuing their prey in the face of the sun, thus giving them an immense advantage over the fugitive minus this protection; and, of course, the same advantage is enjoyed by the more or less nocturnal marauders when winging their way in light too strong for their normal powers of vision. It is for the most part this overhanging eyebrow which gives the keen sinister scowl so eminently a characteristic expression more or less pronounced in all the family of raptores.

This all-important feature we had hitherto found almost universally overlooked by ordinary taxidermists, an omission entailing tameness and want of spirit instead of the quick, life-like gleam of expression so ably caught in the specimens that were now under our examination.

A considerable number of the beautiful

Birds of the wandering wing

which we examined in this congenial nestling spot of genius were mounted amid built-up surroundings, arranged, modelled, and coloured with startling originality of design, but always in strict accordance with the characteristics of the habitats of the birds set up. This added charm of suitable environment, copied with a faithfulness to colour and detail sufficient to defy the closest scrutiny, is still further enhanced by being made to form the foreground of a boldly painted scene, the composition and colouring of which are cleverly arranged to disguise the line of contact where the groundwork blends into the picture. This pleasing deception is so cunningly accomplished that the eye wanders without the slightest check from the sedgy shore of—

Lonely mere and solitary stream,

through grey willowy vistas, the—

Haunts of coot and hern.

HEAD OF STAG SHOT BY THE PRINCE OF WALES IN BALMORAL FOREST.

In the settings of sterner subjects, such as the larger birds of prey, the effect thus produced is striking and grand in the extreme, where the rocky sides of isolated hoary peak and lofty crag—thrones of the golden eagle and ger-falcon—descend precipitously into gloomy depths of misty glen to be lost among the tops of ghostly pines, while in the remoter distance—

A mist-wreath hath the mountain's brow.

Originality of conception and force of handling, combined with a deep and instinctive knowledge of the innate characteristics of animal and bird life, are alike indispensable to the successful rendering of those subtle touches of nature which distinguish all this work and give to it a pre-eminence and charm far in advance of taxidermy as known to the world at large. These necessary qualifications call forth to no small extent the aptitude and inventive talent of poet, sculptor, and artist, and the extreme rarity of a mind gifted with the attributes of this trio doubtless accounts in a large degree for the poverty of creative originality, deft manipulation, and sympathetic appreciation of natural beauty so painfully apparent in the large collections of our museums and scientific institutions.

When discoursing upon the various branches of his art, our new friend expressed some very decided opinions, certainly borne out by the many splendid and practical demonstrations he had placed before us. His views as to the best means of mounting fish appeared to us to be the most effective for displaying and preserving their beauty of form and brilliance of colouring. His mode of procedure is to manipulate the fish itself into the position as regards shape which it will ultimately assume, and then make from it direct a plaster mould. Of course, the casting obtained from this mould is a facsimile of the original, and exactly fits the skin when the latter is folded around it, afterwards to receive the finishing touches which bring out all the necessary iridescent freshness and brilliant metallic lights. Instead of mounting the finny specimens in the usual stiff and conventional way by suspending them as though in the act of swimming, we found that a far superior and more attractive plan is here adopted by representing them as lying gracefully on a bank as though just caught and thrown carelessly aside. Another advantage in favour of this method of treatment is that it affords an

opportunity of introducing behind the fish a suitable landscape into which the ground-work can be made to merge, whereby a very pleasing ensemble may be obtained.

Just before taking our departure we encountered a tame rook, which hopped a short distance out of our way and eyed us with considerable suspicion. This bird, now nearly twelve years of age, has always enjoyed the perfect liberty of unclipped wing, and has a very curious history. Its first start in the world was of a down-hill character, for it fell from the

"RICHARD'S HIMSELF AGAIN."

WORKING FROM LIFE.

nest before it could fly, but luckily, a good Samaritan was at hand, who brought it to its present home, where it was fed almost exclusively on earth-worms. On arriving at rookhood, however, more dainty morsels claimed attention than the "tough little worm," and on no account now can the bird be persuaded to touch one. Though it escaped its first anxiety (rook-pie), its life has been chequered by many mishaps.

Some time ago it picked up a half-inch screw, of which its friends endeavoured to dispossess it, but were horrified on seeing the bird swallow it. This it was feared would prove fatal, but not so; good digestion waited on appetite, and soon Richard was himself again. This remarkable bird is very fond of beer and shows also a strong liking for the soothing effects of the fragrant weed, for when enveloped in circling wreaths of smoke from pipe or cigar its demonstrations of pleasure are as unmistakable as they are ludicrous. Shortly after its adventure with the screw the bird narrowly escaped drowning, for when rescued death had apparently taken place. However, its non-teetotal tendency being borne in mind, brandy was administered with the desired effect, and Corvus was soon striding about the premises again with his usual independent, self-assertive air. A peculiarity at once apparent in this bird is a malformation of the bill, the lower mandible of which is somewhat longer than the upper, which crosses it near the tip. This curious feature sometimes forcibly strikes the stranger in more ways than one if he ruffles the dignity of this sable individual, who very quickly makes him feel himself "before the beak."

Among many birds and animals which here unconsciously pose as living models we noticed a fox, the tamest we had ever seen. Our artistic friend remarked to us that he had never mounted a fox's head to his own satisfaction until he procured this useful and interesting model, and added that it would be quite impossible for anyone unfamiliar with the disposition of the animal to imagine the wonderful changes of its expression from pleasure to anger, and the evasive, cunning, and suspicious glance with which it regards a stranger.

GOLDEN EAGLE ATTACKING A ROE-DEER.

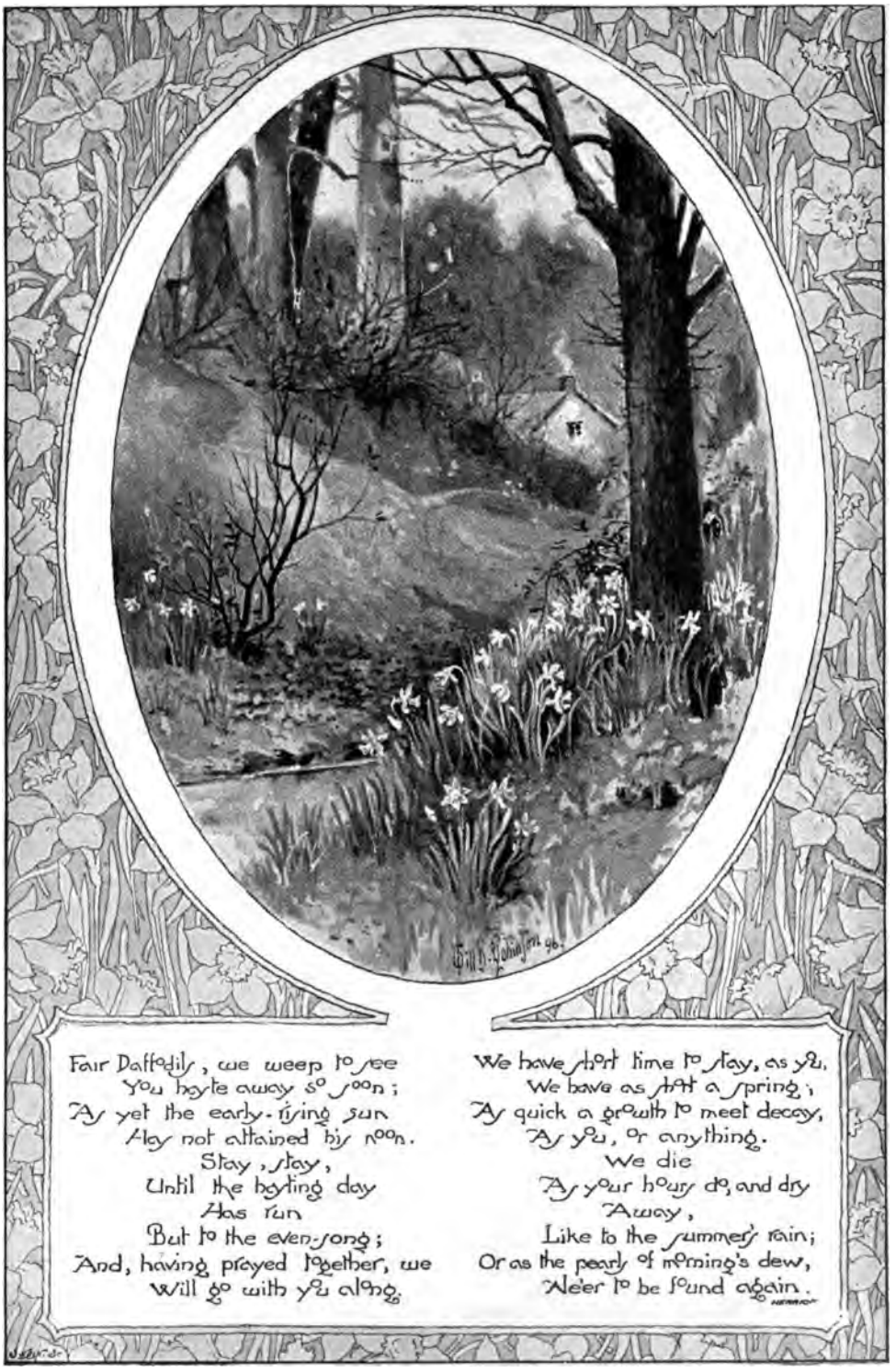
Our attention was drawn from Reynard by the shrill cry of a lapwing evidently in distress, and on turning round we found

two jackdaws grossly illtreating this dainty, aristocratic-looking, and most inoffensive bird. After its rescue, it was discovered that in the fray "the tufted plover" had been deprived of its crest and several tail-feathers by its dusky assailants, perhaps with the mischievous idea of "making both ends meet."

At the close of our entertaining visit to the studios of this "Country Taxidermist" (whose high and varied artistic powers are inadequately embraced by the term) the conviction was borne in upon us that all those ideas we had seen bodied forth so true to nature were fostered and carried out by an all-absorbing love of art for art's sake; and of the man with artistic aspirations we would say, with Leighton, that he—

> Must give his love
> As a religion to his art.

A. J. GOODSON.



Fair Daffodils, we weep to see
You haste away so soon;
As yet the early-rising sun
Hath not attained his noon.
Stay, stay,
Until the hasting day
Has run
But to the even-song;
And, having prayed together, we
Will go with you along.

We have short time to stay, as you,
We have as short a spring;
As quick a growth to meet decay,
As you, or anything.
We die
As your hours do, and dry
Away,
Like to the summer's rain;
Or as the pearls of morning's dew,
Ne'er to be found again.

To Daffodils.

THE SPLENDID SHILLING.

By SHAN F. BULLOCK.

I.

"PLEASE, Mr. John," said Mary the servant, "master's sent me for ye; he's above in the front parlour. An'——"

"What does he want?" asked Mr. John, and raised his eyes. "Tell him I'm busy."

"I did, Sur. I said the machine was smashed an' ye were fixin' it; but he only roared at me. I'd go, Mr. John; 'deed I wid."

"What the sorrow now?" said John, and put down his wrench on the stones of the yard. "*Roared* ye say, Mary?"

"Ay. Och, Sur, spake him fair; don't anger him worse. I know what ails him. *Her* mother was here a while ago—it's that, Mr. John."

"Ay!" said John, and his face darkened. "Ay! An' what the devil brought *her* here?" He rose from his knees, turned down his shirt-sleeves over his brown arms, then took his sleeved waistcoat from the pole of the mowing-machine and buttoned it on. "Did she stay long, Mary?" asked he.

"No, Sur; only a wee while—but I heerd words."

"Ay," said John, and turned towards the kitchen door. "Oh, just so!"

"Ye'll spake him fair, Mr. John?" said Mary the servant, and ventured to lay her hand on his arm. "Och, ye will, Sur! Ye know I'd—we'd be sorry to lose ye, Sur."

John hung on his heel for a step, and looked down at his little well-wisher standing bare-headed and bare-footed in her rags and tatters.

"Oh, ay," he said, and laughed. "Oh, ay. Never fear, Mary; I'll speak him fair, true an' fair as a die. An' I'm thankful to you, me girl, for the hint ye gave me; it's as well to know. Ay, it is."

Then his face fell solemn again, and, with his hands clasped across his back, he went in through the kitchen and along the red-flagged hall into the front parlour.

James Hewitt was sitting in an old leather armchair reading from a newspaper. A man of about sixty-five he was, grey-headed, swarthy, large-limbed, strong of face; a fine specimen of your Ulster Protestant farmer and the living image of what you would expect his son John to be when time had added another forty or so to the sum of his years.

"Ye wanted me?" asked John from his place by the door, where he stood fumbling with his cap. His father lowered his newspaper and looked at him over the rims of his spectacles, then raised the sheet again as if to read.

"Yes," answered he, "I did. You'd better sit down."

"I'd rather stand—I'm waitin'." Both the words and the manner in which they were spoken were disrespectful; very seldom had child of his dared venture so to speak in the presence of James Hewitt. For once, however, the words passed unrebuked.

"Have ye mended the machine?" came from behind the newspaper.

"No—nor won't. Is that all?" Clearly John Hewitt expected a storm, and was for brewing it at once.

"Won't? Won't!" cried his father wrathfully. "What d'ye mean, Sir? Have ye come here to defy me?"

"That's as maybe. I meant I couldn't mend it."

"Then why didn't ye say so?"

"It's no odds. I'm waitin', I say. I know what I'm here for, so ye may as well say your say at once."

The two men eyed each other for a moment, straight and steadily. Along the deep lines of the father's face anger was swiftly flushing; in John's eyes a defiant obstinacy was fast seated.

"Oh! ye know, do ye?" the father began. Then, all suddenly, broke out: "How dare ye disobey me, Sir! Didn't I tell ye, last time I spoke to ye about this, that ye were to give up your—your foolishness wi'—wi' that hussy over there? Didn't I, sir?"

"Ye did."

"Well?"

"Well, I didn't choose to obey ye. Why should I? A man can do as he likes, I suppose?" John made a quick step away from the door. "Look here, father," said he—and his voice came low and solemn—"let's be plain an' have done, for God's sake! It goes against me to be doin' what ye don't like; but that can't be helped, it seems. Ye bid me to give up Rachel Hoey, an' to have no more to do wi' her. Well, I haven't given her up—because I couldn't; an' I won't give her up—because I can't, so help me God! Ye may say your worst, father, an' do it; but there's my say, as plain as I can put it."

The young man put his back against the door, folded his arms, and so standing, with his eyes steadily fixed on the wall before him, waited for the words of his fate. Very soon they came, swiftly, wrathfully, with gathering force at every sentence. James Hewitt was obliged to his son for his plain speaking, and dutiful conduct, and grateful reward for all that had been done for him, It was always pleasant for a father to find his children thwarting and defying him, and insulting his grey hairs.

"I don't want to defy ye, Sir," said John, and spoke more dutifully than he had yet done; "an' I don't think I've insulted ye."

"But ye have, Sir," his father went on, "ye have insulted me, spoke to me like a plough-boy. Be God, Sir, for two pins I'd flog ye!"

John smiled. "It's too late for that, now," said he; "those days are past."

"Ay! they're past, ye think," cried the old man; "they're past, an' so ye defy me. But they're not past, I tell ye; I'm master i' me own house yet, thank God! an' if I can't strap ye I can sack ye. Ye hear that? I told ye before what I'd do. I said if ye had any more doin's wi' them Hoeys, if ye didn't shun their house, if ye didn't renounce the arts o' that little jade, I'd——"

"She's no jade, father," said John quietly. "Even from you I'll not hear that."

"But ye will hear it, Sir! Ye knew, I told ye myself, that no Hoey 'd ever call himself my friend; that between them an' me there never could be anything but hatred. They're a pack of rogues an' liars, one an' all; there niver was one o' them yet fit to carry rags to a beggarman. An' yet—yet ye tell me ye'll marry that jade—yes, jade! An' ye send her mother here to me to speak for ye!"

"I didn't send her," said John. "I knew nothing of it."

"She came—that's enough; I want to know no more. An' now *you* come an', forgetful o' all I've done for ye—ye ungrateful scoundrel!—ye say ye'll defy me an' keep on wi' your devices; that ye *will* do what ye like; that ye *will* marry this girl; that ye don't care for what I say. Don't ye? Look ye here, John; here's a plain word for ye: Are ye or are ye not goin' to do my biddin'?"

"Ye mean give Rachel up?"

"I do."

"No."

"Then out ye go! I disown ye. From this day on you're no son o' mine. Ye hear?"

"I do."

"I'll curse the day ye were born. I'll cut ye off wi' a shillin'. Wait!" The old man rose from his chair, crossed the room, and opening a safe which stood in the corner, took therefrom a folded paper. "Ye see that," he cried, and faced John again. "Ye see that; it's my will, an' in it I've left ye all I possess. Well"—and he took the paper between both hands—"here's your last chance. Take back your word an' it stands; say the word an' I flitter it. Come!"

"Flitter," said John; and the will went in pieces over the floor.

"It's the last o' ye," shouted James: "take yourself off—I disown ye. Out o' me sight!" But John stood firm with his back against the door and his arms still folded.

"Very well," said he, and the words came slowly as from a tongue striving for calmness. "Very well; I'll go, an' may neither o' us rue this day. But I'll say this——"

"Ye'll say nothin'. Me solemn curse on ye! Out ye go!"

John stepped forward.

"But I will speak, father," he said, "for it's my right, and you're unjust. What have I done? Fell in love wi' a girl. What do I want? Only to marry her. It's true ye have an ould grudge against her kind; but what harm did *she* ever do ye? I wanted nothin' o' ye only to be left alone. An' for that ye curse me an' disown me! Ye might ha' kept your breath to cool your porridge. I'll leave your house in welcome; an' may your curses come home——" John stopped suddenly. "No," he went on, "I'll not say it—for cursin' is the work o' the devil. But as the word comes so I take it." He held out his hand. "Good-bye."

His father turned away.

"Ye won't shake hands? Come, father; an' may God forgive us!"

But the old man said not a word; and the next moment saw the door closed between father and son.

II.

John took his coat from a peg in the hall, and without more ado without a glance even through the passage door into the kitchen, where all tearful stood a little bare-footed figure went out through the front door. He was homeless now and penniless; the wide world was before him; where should he go? He looked away across the fields, towards the place where dwelt the maid of his heart, the maid for whom he had just foregone so much. Ah! over there was a friend awaiting him, a friend true as steel, whose own dear self was worth all else in the world. . . . All else! Worth all that—those broad acres lying below there rich in crop and fat pasture; the cattle feeding on the hills; the orchard over there with the sunlight shimmering through the branches; the garden beyond the hedge big and bountiful; the great old-fashioned farm-house at his back, with its warm thatch and clinging ivy and little low-ceiled rooms? All that was his inheritance. In sight of it he had been born and reared: it was his, every acre, every stone of it—only for Rachel. "Is she worth it?" he asked himself, as, turning, he made straight down the lawn, and coming presently to a newly mown meadow, there flung himself on the cool grass. "Is she worth it all?" he repeated over and over. "Yes, yes," his heart answered, "she is worth it all, worth the whole world to you, John Hewitt." . . . Had he done wisely? Would it not have been better to have taken Mary the servant's advice, to have spoken his father patiently and fairly, to have thrown himself on his forbearance and forgiveness; at least not so entirely to have ruined his chances? He had acted impulsively, obstinately; Rachel was worth all the world—still thought this unromantic son of a high-handed father there was no need for a man to make a fool of himself for her sake. No, no; all that was true; but what other way was there? Had he gone on his bare knees to his father, he would only have been cursed all the sooner. Ah! he knew that hot-hearted, stubborn old man; wild horses would not move him; you might as well call the moon from the sky as ask James Hewitt to change his mind. . . . No, there was no other way; his bed was made and he must lie on it; for weal or woe the world was before him, empty of all but his own self and that little girl over there beyond the hills. Ah! but she was everything, everything: a bonnie lass, the pride of his heart. She was everything; let him go seek comfort and encouragement at her hands.

With this great yearning for sympathy close at his heart, John, about nightfall, set out across the Gorteen country, and in a while came to a thatched farm-house set low in the hollow of the hills. A garden, enclosed by a painted fence, and full (just then in the peaceful gloaming) of the heavy odours of old-fashioned cottage flowers, lay in front; and at the gate, soberly clad in a fresh print gown, stood Rachel. Her face lit up at sound of his step, and at sight of his wished-for face; surely a bonnie lass was she—bright-eyed, rosy-cheeked, a blessed vision, you would have said, for any disconsolate lover cast out into the hollow of an empty world.

John quickened his step along the path by the orchard hedge, and, with his hands out, came soon to the little gate and his sweetheart standing there waiting for his greeting. Ah! how glad he was to see her, to hear her voice! Never before had her face shone out more winsome, or her hand clasped his with a warmer pressure of welcome. His heart was full of a great thankfulness for her dear presence and love. Ah! it was great, great—worth all the world, that moment there with Rachel in his arms.

Presently he took her hand, led her into the orchard, and there, under the spreading branches of an old apple-tree, sat down beside her.

"Well, Rachey," said he all suddenly, "it 's come at last."

"What, John?"

"The word to go. Father an' myself had a talk a while ago. We—we—— 'Twas an angry scene."

"Oh, John!"

"Ay, Rachey, me girl, the world's before us. I've nothin' now in the world but you, *a ushla*; only you, me girl. But it 's enough, isn't it, Rachey? Eh? Isn't it?"

Rachel dropped her eyes and began twisting her ring round her finger. "Yes, John," answered she, "I suppose so. But you'll tell me about this affair wi' your father? Who—how did it begin?"

So John, without mentioning just then the unfortunate visit Mrs. Hoey had paid to his father that morning a visit which,

PRESENTLY HE TOOK HER HAND AND LED HER INTO THE ORCHARD.

as he well knew, Rachel had neither prompted nor encouraged, but which was only the well-meant manœuvre of an anxious mother), and without much exaggeration—for John was a modest man and no artist in the science of words—told his sweetheart the story of his interview with his father, its beginning, progress, disastrous close.

"It was to be," said John, "it was to be. I knew surely when Mary—when I set foot inside the parlour and saw his face, that it was all over wi' me. It 's been comin' for months; didn't I tell him months back, Rachel, that I wouldn 't give ye up? An' didn 't he know the kind o' me? He was only waitin' to see what I 'd do; he wanted to be quit o' me. What kind is he?"

"Oh, it 's all a mistake!" cried Rachel; and John, not heeding, went on—

"What kind is he?" asked he, and spread his hands. "How could he do such a thing? His own flesh an' blood! Turn me out, fling me out, disown his own son! For what? Because I chose me own wife for myself; because I, a grown man, refused to do his biddin'; because you an' yours weren't to his likin'! An' to curse me!" shouted John, and flashed into anger as swift and hot as any ever born of James his father—"curse me, his own flesh an' blood! Ah! may God repay——" Rachel caught his arm with both hands.

"No, no, John!" cried she. "No, no! I 'm not worth that."

"But ye are," answered he, his wrath suddenly falling, "ye are, *acushla*; worth all in the world. Never heed, my lass; never heed; let the curses go an' all else with them. I've got you, Rachey. Eh, Rachey? I've got you, an' you've got me, an' together we 'll face the world. Won't we, deary? Look at me, Rachel; look at me. Ye do care for me?"

She looked up frankly at him.

"Ye needn't ask that, John," said she. "Ye know I 'd go to the ends o' the earth wi' ye. Only——"

"Only what, Rachel?"

Her eyes fell again.

"Only ye know, John, I don't like this between you an' your father. It 's wrong—oh, more than wrong!"

"Let that go," said John, and took her hands in his. "Let that go; 'twas to be. We 'll manage, never fear. I 'll work the hands off me to serve ye; we 'll manage. Maybe, in a year or two, I 'd have more land an' better than what 's gone."

"Oh, it 's not that, John; it 's not that! I don't mind the loss, or what 's before us, or——It 's not that. It 's you being sent away—sent away wi' a curse on ye; it 's this between you an' your father, an' because I 'm the cause of it all! Oh, it 's wrong, it 's wrong!"

"Ah, whisht, Rachel; whisht, woman dear! It 's nothin'. Sure we 'll all get used to it; an' sure ye wouldn't have had me give ye up? Ye wouldn't have me put father an' the land an' the rest all before *you*? Eh, Rachey?"

"No, no; but it 's wrong, wrong. John, it mustn't be; it won't be. Sooner than have such a thing on my soul, I 'd go—go, an' never see ye again."

"Never see me again?" repeated John. He caught her face between his two hands and turned it up till it was close to his. "What 's all this, Rachel?" he asked.

"I mean it, John."

"Ye mean what?"

"I won't come between you an' your father, John; I won't have ye cursed an' turned out of home, an' have you an' yours made a by-word in the country. Oh! can't ye see how foolish, an' miserable, an' wicked it all is? Can't ye see how sorry ye would be before long, an' how angry ye would be wi' me, an' the struggle we'd have, the misery——"

John drew back his hands.

"Ah! that 's it," said he, and (as lovers will, particularly your hot-headed kind) quickly changed from sweet to bitter; "that 's it! You're afraid to face the world wi' me, afraid o' the struggle an' the misery—that 's what ye care for me!"

"John," said the girl, "don't be angry wi' me; try to see things as I do. God knows my heart is sore, but—but what can I do? Ye know—ye know how I care for ye—more than heaven an' earth. Ye know the sore trial it is to me to have to say this——"

"No, I don't," cried John; "I know no such thing. I've given up all for your sake. I come to ye for help an' comfort—an' ye turn from me!"

"I don't; I don't, John! I want ye to do right an' to do right myself. Oh! surely, surely John there 's some other way? Surely in time your father would see an' forgive me, and take the curse off ye?"

John jumped up, caught her hands, and pulled her to her feet.

"See here, Rachel," said he, "let 's understand each other. Ye've heard what I said, ye know father, ye know me, an' what 's before us. Are ye afraid? Or are ye goin' to give me up?"

"I can't do wrong, John."

"Answer! Will ye marry me or will ye not?"

"Oh, John, I can't, I can't!"

He dropped her hands, turned and looked out over the hills—the hills which but a few hours before had shone so hopefully, and which now lay black beneath the hopeless night. Just to think of it! Over there a lost inheritance; at his back a faithless, heartless sweetheart; there, under the pitiless sky, himself, homeless and friendless! And that was the end! Good God! Again he turned and stretched out his arms.

"I give ye one more chance," he cried. "Rachel Hoey, as I am, will ye marry me?"

There came back no answer except the sound of a broken sob; and mastered by black anger, John flung the reins to his tongue. This was the end of all. So much for woman's word and vows! Oh! but it had long been coming. She never cared for him. She had long wished to give him the go-by. There was someone else—someone who wasn't an outcast and a beggar. Did he not see it? Who had sent her mother to anger his father and bring things to a climax? Ah, ah, let her whisht!

"Ye needn't talk," cried John, this angry, foolish John, "I know ye sent her. Ye want me to go. This is your chance! Well, I'll oblige ye. From this night ye see my face no more. Ye hear that? An' *you've* done it, Rachel Hoey, mind ye. Of your own will ye've done it. Ah! the fool I was to trust your false, fickle face! May God forgive ye—may God forgive ye!"

And with that John turned, and closing his ears to the pitiful cry which came to him from the lovers' seat beneath the old apple-tree: "Oh, John, John, come back, come back!" went out wrathfully into the night.

III.

For long, in that night of misfortune, John wandered aimlessly through the silent fields; now cursing his fate, now muttering dark vows of vengeance, now, as the monstrous demon of his anger tore at his breast, shouting fiercely and shaking his clenched hands at the solemn stars. At last, near the time of dawn, he found himself in the yard of his father's house.

For a moment his anger went. How came he there? he thought. He had no right now to a stone beneath his shoe in that yard; what devil of torture had led his feet thither? With an oath, he turned and slowly went down the lane towards the road; then, at the gate, remembering that at least he had a right to his own, he wheeled suddenly back, boldly crossed the yard, and lifted the latch of the kitchen door.

Much to his surprise the door yielded. Very cautiously (for all his angry boldness) John stepped on tip-toe into the kitchen. Not a sound was there; not a sound as he opened the passage-door and slipped up the stairs. Oh! home of John Hewitt's childhood, thus to have him enter you and, like a thief, go slinking for his own! You were born there, John; there your mother died; there your father sleeps whose face you have vowed never more to see; through the long days of your youth and early manhood it sheltered you; now, like a thief, you glide through it; and only that little despised Mary up there in her bare attic has ear or care for you! And it is all for the sake of a maiden—a maiden who has turned from you, my poor angry outcast!

Once in his room, John quickly changed his clothes, took his little store of money from a drawer, and noiselessly (for all his anger and bravery) started downstairs. On the landing he passed his father's door; it was open, and he peeped into the room. The dawn had come pale and ghostly; there on his bed his father lay asleep. He could see the old white head; the texts on the wall; the open Bible on the dressing-table with the spectacles lying across the leaves; the shelf in the corner with its scanty stock of books and long rows of medicine-bottles. The demon plunged in John's breast. How could his father sleep there so calmly and his own son an outcast in the world—a friendless, angry outcast, obliged to sneak like a thief in search of his own! Oh, it was damnable! On tip-toe John entered. Black anger was on his soul; the demon was shouting "Vengeance!" There—there, snug and asleep, lay the cause of all his trouble. "Vengeance! Vengeance!" cried the demon. "Now is your time! A sudden blow—a sudden, swift blow——"

The first ray of sunlight shot across the dark counterpane and turned to the colour of blood there before the young man's eyes. Blood! *Murder!* The word was blazoned all round the room. His hands flashed red before his face. With a cry as of a stricken animal, he turned swiftly, ran down and out of the house.

And soon after, a little black figure also went out and followed in his footsteps.

Hardly knowing whither he went, and not much caring, John made across the fields, and before long struck the Bunn Road. The sun was risen; its strong fresh rays smote him with utter weariness. Presently he broke through a hedge, stretched himself in the shade of a haycock, and soon was fast asleep. And close by, that little figure in black watched and waited.

About midday John woke, sat awhile in deep thought (thinking no doubt, though as yet with no very lively horror, of that horrible temptation which but a few hours before had come to him), at last rose, and once more took to the road. He was hungry and weary; the day was bright and gracious, but left him spiritless; in his breast anger was already well-nigh dispossession before the stress of a fine spirit of utter recklessness. An hour or two brought him to Bunn town climbing white and straggling up from the tumbling river; and there quickly he sought meat and drink.

At that time a disastrous war was draining these islands of their manhood; and through most of our towns (through those, at all events, which, like Bunn, boasted barracks among their public buildings) recruiting sergeants stalked proudly in scarlet and ribbons. That day the quick eye of the Bunn sergeant, as he sat in the bar-parlour of the Diamond Hotel, winding his silver tongue into the dull ear of a gaping yokel, fell upon our outcast sitting forlorn over his meal in the corner. Here was his man, thought he; and soon, having hooked his innocent, he was busy spreading the roll of glory before the listless eyes of John. Ah! the army was the place for your strong, clever fellow—above all for the well-educated, handsome giant that John showed himself to be; nowhere was promotion quicker or surer; the life was noble, healthy, manly; the girls ran wild after you.

"I say, Sergeant," John broke in, "leave the girls alone, me son. Ye'll not tempt me wi' them. Damn them! say I."

The sergeant looked hard at the young man, then winked knowingly, called for more drink, and went on with his skilful tappings on the drum of Fame. Ah! the sport soldiers had, the free and easy life—no troubles, no cares, plenty of food and drink, plenty of devilment; and at the end a glorious return to friends and home!

"Never heed that either, Sergeant," said John. "There's no home for me now, nor friends. I'm done wi' them all, damn 'em! one an' all. Divil cares! Out wi' your shillin', me son, an' pass the liquor."

So John took the shilling; and at sight of it lying bright in his palm an idea came to him—a brilliant idea, he was sure (as, indeed, it was bound to be, being born of anger and recklessness and the fumes of recruiting whisky); one which made him slap his leg and laugh loud, and vow that the army was soon to receive a thundering comical dog.

"Easy a while, Sergeant," said he; "take another glass till I write a scrape. Hi, there! more drink, an' that paper an' ink as fast as ye can. Now easy, Sergeant; easy! I'll not be a tick, for the words are on the tip o' me tongue. Whisht now, an' don't spoil sport," said John, as, spreading his elbows and calling to his face a smile of supreme satisfaction, he began a letter; presently finished it, and with the shilling enclosed it in an envelope.

"Now, Sergeant," said he, and set a great flourish beneath the superscription on the cover; "now, me son, I'm ready. Ye see that letter? Well, that's the finest joke I ever made—the very finest." (God forgive him, how often afterwards, when lying weary and home-sick under foreign skies, did he think with wondering shame of that heartless joke!) "Man! when that comes to the right place it'll make the man dance with rage—ay, and serve him right for what he's done to me. Ay, ay! Och, och! but Irishmen are the play-boys, full o' fun they are. No more drink? Come on; just one! Well, well, then, off we go—off for death or glory."

So the two swaggered out; and half-way down Main Street, just as John was turning into the post-office, a little figure in black ran from a shop door and caught him by the sleeve.

"Aw, Sur, Sur," said Mary the servant, "ye haven't done it? Ye haven't 'listed? Och, don't say it! It'll brek me—me —— Och, no!"

The sergeant laughed knowingly and turned away. The same old story, thought he.

"Ay, Mary," answered John, "I'm off—off to the wars, me girl. The morrow or next day 'll see me in scarlet red. But what brings you here, Mary?"

Mary's eyes fell.

"Ah," said she, "I—I—master sent me a message. Ah! no, Sur," she went on, "don't go. The master 'll forgive ye. Come back, Mr. John. Ah do, Sur, for God's sake!"

John laughed down at the serious little freckled face.

"No, no," said he; "there's no forgiveness for me now, an' I want none. Good-bye Mary, an'—look here, take this letter to father. Just give it to him an' say nothin'. Good-bye, Mary; safe home an' God be with ye!"

"Ah, no, no, Sur! Ah no, no! I can't bear it. Ah, God ha' mercy! He's gone, he's gone, an' niver, niver will I see his face again! Ah! Mr. John, Mr. John, come back to me, come back!"

But John went on up Barrack Hill on his way to glory.

Some time that same day a tax-cart, driven by an old man, as it turned off into the Bunn Road, was met by a young girl. She snatched at the reins.

"Mr. Hewitt," said she, "I want John. Where is he?"

The old man looked down into the girl's pitiful face, all pale and worn with weeping. So this was John's sweetheart! this was the girl who had made him curse John, and disown him, and turn him out of doors! A bonnie lass she was, too; a bonnie lass. . . .

"John?" he answered. "John? I dunno where he is—I haven't seen him since yesterday. Haven't you, my lass?"

"Yes, yes, but he left me—went away in anger; an' he said I'd never see him again. Oh, Sir, Sir! what has come to him?"

SHE SNATCHED AT THE REINS.

The old man shrugged his shoulders and turned away his face.

"God knows, lass!" he said. "God knows!" and once again, for the hundredth time that morning, there flashed before his eyes the picture of John as in a dream at daybreak that morning he had seen him, holding out his arms and begging for forgiveness, begging that the curse might be taken off his head and that he might be given shelter in his own home; then,

with a great cry, turning away, and with his face in his hands going out through the open door. Yes, God knew; and God had sent that dream to warn him of his sins; and now—now was God's swift justice about to show him that repentance had come all too late? He turned his face again, and looked down at Rachel. "Come, lass," said he, "jump up. I dunno where John is; but jump up, maybe we 'd both find him."

So these two, John's father and his sweetheart, drove on together towards Bunn town, and half-way there Mary the servant stopped them, and delivered John's letter.

Very deliberately—for there was something like dread on his heart—the old man put down the reins and tore open the envelope. A coin dropped out, jingled on the bottom of the cart, rolled out upon the road, and was picked up by Mary the servant. Slowly the old man read the letter; then without a word handed it to Rachel.

Dear Sir (she read),—***Before you kicked me out of your house you swore you would cut me off with a shilling. As I know you would begrudge me even that, and as I have no wish to be beholden to you for anything, I herewith enclose twelve pence sterling, being the amount which you have decided to leave me under the terms of your new will. I may add that the money has just been handed to me by one George Brown, recruiting sergeant of one of Her Majesty's Regiments of Foot.—Yours, John Hewitt.***

P.S.—You will never see my face again.

"Never see his face again!" cried Rachel. "Never!"

"Niver see his face again!" cried Mary the servant. "Aw, Sur, is that what Mr. John says? Niver see his face again!"

The old man picked up the reins and turned for home.

"Never see his face again?" he repeated. "Never see his face again?"

And they never did; for in the wars John's portion was not glory.

Photo by Russell and Sons, Baker Street.

SIR PHILIP CURRIE,

BRITISH AMBASSADOR AT CONSTANTINOPLE.

THE ENGLISH ILLUSTRATED MAGAZINE.

THE BRITISH EMBASSY AT CONSTANTINOPLE.

By JOHN FOSTER FRASER.

"SOME people in England think that Ambassadors are useless," said Sir Philip Currie to me one evening in his study at the British Embassy, Constantinople. "I have heard it argued," he added, "that Consuls could do the work equally well, that they could communicate what they learn in a foreign country to their Government, which would consider the matter, come to a decision, and send it in a letter, and so there would be an end to the whole business without any diplomacy at all. But folks who talk like that fail to understand the real duties of a diplomat."

"The real duties I would take to be diplomacy," I ventured, "although the word is capable of several constructions."

"Yes," replied his Excellency; "but diplomacy is not to be taken as merely another name for intriguing, for attempting to gain advantages by cunning and far-reaching. An Ambassador is the representative of his Government, which has a great deal of business to transact with other Governments. And just as in a dispute between two firms a settlement can far better be arrived at by a chat between representatives of different interests than by correspondence—which is generally frigid and formal—so an Ambassador, being personally acquainted with the sovereign at whose Court he represents his own sovereign, and knowing with some intimacy the country and its Government, can bring a personal influence to bear to smooth down little troubles and keep the relationship between the two nations in amiable harmony."

Photo by Bassano.

LADY CURRIE (VIOLET FANE).

"Then you do not believe that an Ambassador should devote his energies to making a stir in the world by achieving diplomatic triumphs for the benefit of his own country and the despoiling of another?"

"I certainly do not," said Sir Philip. "But rather that he should be like a little boy—seen and not heard?"

"Well, I can hardly go so far as that," he laughed, "but I do think that an Ambassador serves his sovereign and his Government far better by keeping on friendly terms with the Court he is visiting than by continually having quarrels and demanding this, that, and the other. Of course, there are times when it is necessary for an Ambassador, as representing his Government, to take a firm stand and to be unshakable in his demands."

I was sorely tempted to question the Ambassador about Britain's relationship with Turkey with reference to Armenia, but I forbore, because we agreed at the outset that politics should not be discussed

between us. An Ambassador always knows so much and says so little that one cannot help regarding him with a feeling of perplexed curiosity.

Sir Philip Currie is eminently qualified for the high position he holds. There is no ambassadorial post so interesting and yet so responsible as that at Constantinople. The Turks are Eastern in custom and in thought. They do things differently from the way they are done by Western nations. The Turk, be he a cigarette-dealer or a high dignitary at the Sublime Porte, spends his whole life in diplomacy. The circuitous route is always his route. Therefore, one can understand the delicate tact necessary on the part of the representative of the Government of Britain, which does not always manage to see eye to eye with his Imperial Majesty the Sultan. Sir Philip Currie, who has spent most of his life in dealing with Eastern questions, is a tall, well-built, courteous man, always ready to talk about his flower-beds and horses, though he hesitates at politics. His hair is grey, but about his countenance there is an air of kindliness, which gains the confidence of whomsoever he is addressing. All his life has been spent in connection with the Foreign Office. As long ago as April in the year 1854 he was appointed a clerk on probation, and a month or so later was installed as a junior clerk. He soon had opportunities of showing his abilities. He became temporarily attached to the Legation at St. Petersburg, and after he had accompanied Lord Wodehouse (now the Earl of Kimberley) on a special mission to the King of Denmark, he was made a secretary in the diplomatic service. From 1867, when he assisted Mr. Julian Fane as protocolist at the conference held in London on the affairs of Luxemburg, till twenty-two years later, when he was appointed permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Sir Philip Currie had many important duties. For two years he was private secretary to the Marquis of Salisbury. He was one of the secretaries at the famous Berlin Conference, and assisted at the investiture of Alfonso XII. of Spain with the Order of the Garter in 1881. After he became Under-Secretary of the Foreign Office Sir Philip was one of the British delegates appointed to examine into the question of the boundary between the Netherland territories in Borneo and those under British protection. It was a high but worthily deserved honour that was conferred upon him at the beginning of 1894, when he was appointed British Ambassador to the Sublime Porte. He told me it was the one ambassadorial post he would have chosen, next to Paris; for Eastern politics had always a fascination for him.

The study in which I had a chat with the Ambassador is a pleasant, cosy room, done in brown morocco, while the floor is covered with a thick Turkish carpet. Sir Philip's table is in the centre of the room, so that when at work he sits with his back to the window. When I was with him there were only a few arranged sheets of foolscap on the desk, and, were it not for the miniature lift by which papers are sent up to him from the clerks in the room below, there was nothing to indicate while talking to this amiable, courteous man, in a tweed suit and with carefully arranged rose in his button-hole, that I was in a place where the Ambassadors of all the Great Powers frequently meet to discuss grave matters of State. One of the pictures on the wall to which the eye wanders is that of a handsome young lady. It represents Lady Currie as a girl, and her Ladyship in these later years has lost nothing of the charm depicted in the sketch which is ever close to the Ambassador. There is an interesting woodcut of the Sultan Ibrahim, as well as engravings of Mirabeau and Charles Fox. One of the Marchioness of Granby's characteristic sketches of the Marquis of Salisbury hangs close to a curious old map of the Ottoman Empire a couple of centuries or so ago. Notions of distance were somewhat hazy in those days, and, of course, the countries are in strange disproportion to one another. The volumes on the bookshelves are miscellaneous. There are political works, but by their side I saw the reminiscences of that jovial old turfite, Sir John Astley, while a book dealing with what can be grown in an English flower garden was wedged between the "Reports of Secretaries of Embassies" and Thiers' history.

"You know," I said to his Excellency, "that the popular idea is that the Sultan spends a life of luxurious ease. But I suppose that, like many other popular ideas, it is erroneous."

"Quite," was the emphatic reply of the Ambassador. "The Sultan is an extremly hard-working man. Not only does he personally take an interest in every matter of State, but he is often occupied far into the night with his Ministers."

"When the Sultan desires an audience with you, do you converse together in French?" I asked.

"No. The Sultan does not speak French—at least, he does not in the presence of Europeans. The Grand Vizier usually acts as interpreter, but the present Grand Vizier speaks no more French than his master, so that when I see the Sultan I am accompanied by the chief dragoman attached to the Embassy—Mr. Block—and the conversation is conducted through him."

"Does not the Sultan have an interpreter of his own?"

"Oh, yes; Munir Pasha, who is also Grand Master of the Ceremonies, is always present."

"When does the Sultan receive the Ambassadors?"

"There is no fixed time, but, as a rule, his Majesty receives them after he has attended the Selamik on Friday."

"Tell me, your Excellency, whether life out here on the banks of the Bosphorus is, all things considered, as pleasant as on the banks of the Thames."

"Well," replied Sir Philip, "life in Turkey is in many ways very agreeable. As you know, there is much more rest than can be secured in the bustle and hurry of London life. The feeling of tranquillity is delightful, and the climate is charming. The only drawback is that it is rather enervating, and after one has stayed here for some time one becomes conscious of a loss of energy."

"Anyway, there is plenty of beautiful scenery, and even the Thames can hardly give anything better than Therapia up the Bosphorus," I said.

"Yes, that is so. I am very fond of horse exercise, and many an afternoon I have a gallop over the hills, which are full of charm. And as you say, Therapia, where my summer residence is situated, is exceedingly fine."

THE AMBASSADOR AND LADY CURRIE IN THEIR CAIQUE ON THE BOSPHORUS.

We next fell to talking of flowers, and the Ambassador told me, with a good deal of pride, that during his stay at the Embassy he had done all he could to make the garden—which has a lovely outlook over the Golden Horn towards the domes and minarets in old Stamboul—a place of pleasure and delight. The Embassy itself, though a bold, massive structure, is by no means so imposing as some of the other Embassies in Constantinople. The first British Embassy was at Rapamat, by Pera. But in 1811 the Turks, being gratified by the way the British treated the French in Egypt, presented them with the present

site, on which was erected a wooden building. This structure, however, was burned down in 1832, and the present Embassy, from plans by Sir Charles Barry, was finished in 1844. It is a replica of the Farnese Palace at Rome in all respects, with the exception that the upper-storey windows are square instead of round. It had the misfortune of being partly gutted in 1870.

Despite its rigid and austere appearance from the outside, one has only to get within the huge doors to find that the Embassy is an exceedingly comfortable home, and that everything has been done to make it bright and pleasant. There is a large covered-in courtyard, in which grows a mass of foliage, palms, and other plants. Opposite the main staircase is a big tent, laid with heavy Oriental carpets. A curiously worked old chair of Louis XIV. period stands at one end, and on each side is a sedan chair. There are a couple of gigantic Persian candlesticks, interesting because of the elaborate workmanship, battle scenes and scenes of the chase, and unintelligible inscriptions so far as I am concerned, covering the whole of them. In the centre of the yard is a polished brass mangal, such as is used in most large Turkish residences for heating the place, and close by is a stone vase with carving brought from Athens. With the plants and these decorations the courtyard is a charming place, and quite suitable for the purpose to which Lady Currie sometimes puts it, of dispensing tea to her friends in the afternoon.

THE BRITISH EMBASSY AT THERAPIA.

The marble staircase is of exceedingly fine workmanship. The marble is white inlaid with panels of green-and-red marl, so that the effect—combined with the rich carpets and the flowers bunched at the turn in the stairs—is one suggestive almost of magnificence. At the top of the steps I was met by a benevolent-looking little chap, who jumped about in ecstasy and showed me how clever he was by being able to stand still, wink intelligently, and pretend to smoke a cigarette. This was Buzz, the Embassy dog, the chum of the whole diplomatic circle in Constantinople, and the special favourite of Lady Currie, to whom he was sent as a present by Sir Nicholas O'Conor, the British representative at Pekin. Buzz, who got his name from the humming sound he makes while climbing over the shoulders of his friends, is a pug born in the Palace at Pekin, and he sometimes looks serious enough to have been intended for a Bishop.

The Embassy is not only a residence for Sir Philip and Lady Currie, but all the diplomatic business is conducted under the same roof. I had the pleasure of wandering through the various rooms and offices, saw the dragomans busily engaged in translating documents, and spent some time in what is called the Chancery, and where the secretaries appeared to be taking life as easy as any Oriental might desire. About the wall I noticed photographs of former Ambassadors—Lord Dufferin, Mr. Goschen, Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, and others. Over the mantelpiece hangs a coloured print of no great intrinsic merit, but interesting from the fact that it represents the reception of Viscount Strangford—British Ambassador to the Sublime Porte—by the Sultan in 1821. There is a room leading out of the Chancery packed with volumes of State papers, which, were they made known to the public, would no doubt prove interesting reading. The papers, which go back fifty years—those of an earlier date resting in the archives of the Foreign Office at home—are all arranged, so that without trouble all the papers dealing with Syria or Karamania or any other country within the Ottoman Empire may be reached immediately.

During our chat I asked the Ambassador what he took to be the sentiments of the Turks towards the people of Western nations.

"The Turks," he said, "mix very little with European society. You might think that European influence would in time break down the barrier there is between the two peoples. But all indications are the other way, and the Turk has now less to do with Europeans than formerly. They are not encouraged to do so by the Sultan; indeed, I do not think I am misrepresenting his Majesty when I say that he discourages it."

"But is there not a movement amongst what are known as the younger Turks to adapt themselves to European ways, both in government and customs?"

Perhaps the question was more searching than I had any right to put to an Ambassador. "I have heard of something of the kind," was the cautious reply I received, and I did not press the point.

We next fell to discussing books, and Sir Philip, with a mild shrug of the shoulders, lamented that culture was not a strong point with Turkey. He told me that the relations between the members of the diplomatic corps was one of friendliness and cordiality, but was afraid they must altogether often cause annoyance to the Sultan, who probably wishes he could renew the practice of his ancestors and lock up the Ambassadors in the Seven Towers while he went to war with their masters. In words of warm praise, his Excellency spoke to me of his secretaries

THE BRITISH EMBASSY AT PERA.

and assistants at the Embassy. "I am proud of them," he said, "for I am sure I have as able a staff as any British Ambassador to a foreign Court can desire."

"Madame l'Ambassadrice d'Angleterre" is a title that most ladies covet. And Lady Currie, kindly and genial, with a pleasant smile for all her guests—a charming type of an English lady—is an ideal hostess and wife of an Ambassador, though she raised her shoulders in dismay when I remarked that perhaps she found an interest in dabbling just a little in politics. She confessed she bothered her head with no such thing. She has hobbies of her own, and the collection of miniatures she showed me is one of the finest I have seen. The Government provides little furniture for its representative, except an oil-painting of the Queen and a few chairs stamped with "V.R." on the back. So Lady Currie had taken most of her things from home, and, surrounded by her treasures, she can, when she likes, forget she is several thousands of miles away from Park Lane, and among a people whose language she does not know. In the corridors are a series of pictures representing the famous Eglinton tournament, a family from which Lady Currie claims descent.

The drawing-rooms, which look out over the gardens and beyond the Golden Horn, are decorated with much taste. In the Yellow Room, where the furniture is all of gold and red, I spent some time admiring the miniatures. On the side-tables were several elaborate French vases, and a wonderfully worked brass clock. I fell in love with a delightful old Venetian screen, with its soft colouring and dainty floral embellishment. Passing between heavy curtains I went into the ball-room, elaborately upholstered in white and gold, with yellow silk curtains by the windows, and three crystal candelabra hanging in the centre, capable of holding about four hundred candles. The dining-room is a bright, cheerful, white-panelled apartment with a roof decorated in grey and gold. On the oak sideboard was a really good display of old silver. Four silver trays and some antique cruets made me envious. In the Embassy there is about £20,000 worth of Government silver.

It was in the Blue Drawing-Room that I had the pleasure of spending over an hour in conversation with Lady Currie, while Buzz was rushing round, going through all sorts of antics.

The Ambassadress drew my attention to several beautiful Cosway prints which she has taken some pains in collecting. All the pictures about the room are of interest. I noticed a satin screen on which Lady Currie had herself painted bunches of flowers. In one corner I found three exquisite water-colours of bits of Stamboul; the top of a minaret, a view of the Bosphorus; some Turkish girls camping. There is a book of mezzotints, the pages of which I turned over with fondness, for the work was so delicate and so vigorous, contrasting strangely with many of the mezzotints one sees nowadays. The miniatures, however, are what Lady Currie took the most pleasure in, and she pointed out several excellent examples of Cosway's work, such as the miniatures of George, Prince of Wales, the Duke of York, and Lady Holland. Lady Currie is also a collector of rare books and first editions, but these were all left far away at home in England, for she did not feel justified at running any risks by taking them out to Turkey.

It was natural that our conversation should turn on the position of women in the Orient.

"I have been in the harems of two former Grand Viziers," said Lady Currie, "and I found the ladies very charming, speaking French, and being accomplished in many ways. In the harem of —— Pasha they were dressed in European costume; but afterwards, to please me, they put on their Turkish attire. I have visited other harems; but really one is not doing a kindness to the ladies by going, for the very fact of my being the wife of the British Ambassador seems to throw some kind of suspicion on them. I have been advised to go incognita; but as I would not think of making a secret of my visits, I don't go at all."

"The 'New Woman,' of whom we are tired to death in London," I said, "has not yet penetrated into the harems of the pashas, I suppose?"

Lady Currie laughed.

"Well, there are even emancipated Turkish ladies; and there are some, I know, who write articles for the newspapers. Of course they feel very much humiliated at the position of their sisters. But there are other Turkish ladies perfectly satisfied with their life in the harem, and who seem to think that it is we who are not in the harems that have much the worst time of it."

Life in the East Lady Currie said she found to be full of novelty and interest. "You are apparently in a civilised country, and yet at times you feel you are not;

there is so much that is dramatic and strange, providing plenty of food for the imagination."

"You have been received by the Sultan?" I asked.

"Oh, yes. He is always most courteous, and generally sits by my side while we converse through the medium of an interpreter. I have always been struck by the Sultan's dignity and gentle manner. I believe he is particularly fond of his children, especially of one little boy. I have never visited the royal harem, because the Sultan has no wives. Strange as it may seem, his Majesty is probably almost the only unmarried man in the empire."

Both the Ambassador and Lady Currie referred in kindly words of appreciation to the chief secretary at the Embassy, the Hon. Michael Herbert, who acts as Chargé d'Affaires in the Ambassador's absence. Mr. Herbert, who is the brother of the Earl of Pembroke, holds the distinction of making an almost unparalleled advance in the diplomatic service. One evening, when Constantinople was half hid under a drizzling rain, and the Grand Rue de Pera was a good deal less attractive than the Strand on a murky foggy day, I was invited to Mr. Herbert's private room at the Embassy, and there, before a cosy wood fire, we were able to talk over the delights and the disadvantages of a diplomatic career.

"There is always the prospect of being removed from one post to another at almost a moment's notice," said Mr. Herbert; "but, on the other hand, there is the pleasure of studying other countries and the acquisition of the knowledge that there are other nations in the world besides England."

Mr. Herbert, though only thirty-eight years of age, has occupied several important posts on the Continent and in America.

"What place do you like best to reside in?" I asked.

"Paris. I enjoyed Paris, for there one gets a combination of plenty of hard work and amusement. Besides, one is always so near home. At Washington, however, one feels far away, and unless one constantly goes over to England there is a chance of losing touch with one's friends. After leaving America I was at the Hague for a year before being sent out here. Diplomacy in America and here in Turkey are two very different things. The Americans think little of diplomacy, whereas the Orientals think of nothing else."

Mr. Herbert, who is a tall, pleasant-featured man, and recalls with a laugh a description of him in a Transatlantic journal as "a languid dude in a claw-hammer coat with a Du Maurier hero air," lives in the Rue Immam. Mrs. Herbert, whom the First Secretary married in 1888 during his stay at Washington, has made the house as English as possible, though the front hall is adorned in Turkish style. Many of Mr. and Mrs. Herbert's belongings are scattered about the world—in London, the Hague, and elsewhere—but wherever they go they carry about with them a collection

BUZZ, THE POODLE AT THE BRITISH EMBASSY, CONSTANTINOPLE.

of the photographs of their friends, including Mr. Bayard, Mr. Blaine, and other American Ministers, as well as sketches of Wilton, the beautiful home of the Herberts down in Wiltshire.

Constantinople is full of strange sights and curious customs. It is a city of Oriental mystery; but one forgets the stories of dark deeds, treachery, and savage cruelty of which so much of its records is made up when once within the Embassy gates and experiencing the delight of a hearty English welcome from the British Ambassador, Lady Currie, and the various members of the staff. I write this far from the lovely Bosphorus, but with pleasant recollections of the time I was a visitor on its shores.

Three Miraculous Soldiers

BY STEPHEN CRANE.

I.

THE girl was in the front room on the second floor, peering through the blinds. From between the slats she had a view of the road as it wended across the meadow to the woods, and again when it reappeared crossing the hill, a half-mile away. It lay yellow and warm in the summer sunshine. From the long grasses of the meadow came the rhythmic click of the insects. Occasionally frogs in the hidden brook made a peculiar "chug-chug" sound as if somebody throttled them. The leaves of the wood swung in gentle winds. Through the dark-green branches of the pines that grew in the front yard could be seen the mountains, far to the south-east and inexpressibly blue.

Mary's eyes were fastened upon the little streak of road that appeared on the distant hill. Her face was flushed with excitement, and the hand which stretched in a strained pose on the sill trembled because of the nervous shaking of the wrist. The pines whisked their green needles with a soft hissing sound against the house.

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At last the girl turned from the window and went to the head of the stairs. "Well, I just know they're coming, anyhow," she cried argumentatively to the depths.

A voice retorted with the shrillness and mechanical violence of occasional housewives. The girl swished her skirts defiantly and returned to the window.

Upon the yellow stream of road that lay across the hillside there now was a handful of black dots—horsemen. A cloud of dust floated away. The girl flew to the head of the stairs and whirled down to the kitchen.

"They're coming! They're coming!"

It was as if she had cried "Fire!" Her mother had been peeling potatoes while seated comfortably at the table. She sprang to her feet. "No—it can't be—how you know it's them—where?" The stubby knife fell from her hand and two or three curls of potato-skin dropped from her apron to the floor.

The girl turned and dashed upstairs. Her mother followed, gasping for breath and yet continuing to fill the air with questions, reproach, and remonstrance. The girl was already at the window eagerly pointing. "There! There! See 'em! See 'em!"

Rushing to the window the mother scanned for an instant the road on the hill. She crouched back with a groan. "It's them, sure as the world. It's them!" She waved her hands in despairing gestures.

The black dots vanished into the woods. The girl at the window was quivering, and her eyes were shining like water when the sun flashes. "Hush! They are in the woods. They'll be here directly." She bent down and intently watched the green archway from whence the road emerged. "Hush! I hear them coming!" she swiftly whispered to her mother, for the elder woman had dropped dolefully upon the mattress and was sobbing. And indeed the girl could hear the quick, dull trample of horses. She stepped aside with sudden apprehension, but she bent her head forward in order still to scan the road.

"Here they are!"

There was something very theatrical in the sudden appearance of these men to the eyes of the girl. It was as if a scene had been shifted. The forest suddenly disclosed them—a dozen brown-faced troopers in blue, galloping.

"Oh, look!" breathed the girl. Her mouth was puckered into an expression of strange fascination.

The little troop rode in silence. At its head was a youthful fellow with some dim yellow stripes upon his arm. In his right hand he held his carbine, slanting upward, with the stock resting upon his knee. He was absorbed in a scrutiny of the country before him. In the rear of the sergeant the rest of the squad rode in thin column with creak of leather and tinkle of steel and tin. The troopers glanced for a moment, like casual tourists, and then returned to their study of the region in front. The heavy thudding of the hoofs became a small noise. The dust, hanging in sheets, slowly sank.

The sobs of the woman on the bed took form in words, which, while strong in their note of calamity, yet expressed a querulous mental reaching for some near thing to blame. "And it'll be lucky for us if we ain't both butchered in our sleep—plundering and running off horses—old Santo's gone: you see if he ain't—plundering——"

"But, Ma," said the girl, perplexed and terrified in the same moment, "they've gone!"

"Oh, but they'll come back," cried the mother without pausing her wail. "They'll come back—trust them for that—running off horses." She suddenly lifted herself and sat rigid, staring at her daughter. "Mary," she said in a tragic whisper, "the kitchen door isn't locked." Already she was bent forward to listen, her mouth agape, her eyes fixed upon her daughter.

"Mother—" faltered the girl.

Her mother again whispered, "The kitchen door isn't locked." Motionless and mute, they stared into each other's eyes.

At last the girl quavered: "We better—we better go and lock it." The mother nodded. Hanging arm in arm, they stole across the floor toward the head of the stairs. A board of the floor creaked. They halted and exchanged a look of dumb agony.

At last they reached the head of the stairs. From the kitchen came the bass humming of the kettle and frequent sputterings and cracklings from the fire. These sounds were sinister. The mother and the girl stood incapable of movement. "There's somebody down there," whispered the older woman.

Finally, the girl made a gesture of resolution. She twisted her arm from her mother's hands, and went two steps downward. She addressed the kitchen: "Who's there?" Her tone was intended to be dauntless. It rang so dramatically in the

silence that a sudden new panic seized them, as if the suspected presence in the kitchen had cried out to them. But the girl ventured again. "Is there anybody there?" No reply was made save by the kettle and the fire.

With a stealthy tread the girl continued her journey. As she neared the last step the fire crackled explosively and the girl screamed. But the mystic presence had not swept around the corner to grab her, so she dropped to a seat on a step and laughed. "It was—was only the fire," she said, stammering hysterically.

Then she arose with sudden fortitude, and cried: "Why, there isn't anybody there. I know there isn't. She marched down into the kitchen. On her face was dread, as if she half expected to confront something, but the room was empty. She cried joyously: "There's nobody here. Come on down, Ma." She ran to the kitchen door and locked it.

The mother came down to the kitchen. "Oh, dear! what a fright I've had! It's given me the sick headache, I know it has."

"Ma," said the girl, coming from the window, "the barn-door is open. I wonder if they took old Santo."

"Of—of course they have. Of course, Mary, I don't see what we are going to do. I don't see what we are going to do."

The girl said, "Ma, I'm going to see if they took old Santo."

"Mary!" cried the mother; "don't you dare!"

The girl had unlocked the door and stepped upon the porch. The mother cried in despair, "Mary!"

"Why, there isn't anybody out there," the girl called in response. She stood for a moment with a curious smile upon her face as of gleeful satisfaction at her daring.

The breeze was waving the boughs of the apple-trees. A rooster with an air importantly courteous was conducting three hens upon a foraging tour. The girl swung impulsively from the little stoop and ran toward the barn.

The great door was open, and the carved pig, which usually performed the office of a catch, lay on the ground. The girl could not see into the barn because of the heavy shadows. She paused in a listening attitude and heard a horse munching placidly. She gave a cry of delight and sprang across the threshold. Then she suddenly shrank back and gasped. She had confronted three men in grey seated upon the floor with their legs stretched out and their backs against Santo's manger. Their dust-covered countenances were expanded in grins

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II.

As Mary sprang backward and screamed, one of the calm men in grey, still grinning, announced: "I knowed you'd holler." Sitting there comfortably, the three surveyed her with amusement.

Mary caught her breath, throwing her hand up to her throat. "Oh!" she said. "You—you frightened me."

"We're sorry, lady, but couldn't help it no way," cheerfully responded another, "I knowed you'd holler when I seen you coming yere, but I raikined we couldn't help it no way. We hain't a-troubling this yere barn, I don't guess. We been doing some mighty tall sleeping yere. We done woke when them Yanks loped past."

"Where did you come from? Did—did you escape from the—the Yankees?" The girl still stammered and trembled.

The three soldiers laughed. "No, M'm. No, M'm. They never catch us. We was in a muss down the road yere about two mile. And Bill yere they gin it to him in the arm. Keh-pluck. And they pasted me thah, too. Curious. And Sim yere, he didn't get nothing, but they chased us all quite a little piece, and we done lose track of our boys."

"Was it—was it those who passed here just now? Did they chase you?"

The men in grey laughed again. "What—them? No, indeedee! There was a mighty big swarm of Yanks and a mighty big swarm of our boys too. What—that little passel? No, M'm."

She became calm enough to scan them more attentively. They were much begrimed and very dusty. Their grey clothes were tattered. Splashed mud had dried upon them in reddish spots. It appeared, too, that the men had not shaved for many days. Of their hats there was a singular diversity. One soldier wore the little blue cap of the Northern infantry, with corps emblem and regimental number still upon it; one wore a great brown slouch hat with a wide hole in the crown, and the other wore no hat at all. The left sleeve of one man and the right sleeve of another had been slit, and the arms were neatly bandaged with a clean cloth. "These hain't no more than two little cuts," explained one. "We stopped up yere to Mis' Heavitt's—she said her name was—and she bind them for us. Bill yere, he

had the thirst come on him, and the fever, too. We——"

Mary interrupted him without intention. "Are you hungry?" she asked.

The soldiers looked at each other, struck by some sudden and singular shame. They hung their heads. "No, M'm," replied one at last.

Santo, in his stall, was tranquilly chewing and chewing. Sometimes he looked benevolently over at them. He was an old horse, and there was something about his eyes and his forelock which created the impression that he wore spectacles. Mary went and patted his nose. "Well, if you are hungry, I can get you something," she told the men; "or you might come to the house."

"We wouldn't dast go to the house," said one. "That passel of Yanks was only a scouting crowd, most like—just an advance—more coming likely."

"Well, I can bring you something," cried the girl eagerly. Won't you let me bring you something?"

"Well," said a soldier, with embarrassment, "we hain't had much. If you could bring up a little snack-like—just a snack—we'd——"

Without waiting for him to cease, the girl turned toward the door; but before she had reached it she stopped abruptly. "Listen," she whispered. Her form was bent forward — her head turned and lowered, her hand extended toward the men in a command for silence.

They could faintly hear the thudding of many hoofs, the clank of arms, and frequent calling voices.

"By cracky, it's the Yanks!" The soldiers scrambled to their feet and came toward the door. "I knowed that first crowd was only an advance."

The girl and the three men peered from the shadows of the barn. The view of the road was intercepted by tree-trunks and a little hen-house. However, they could see many horsemen streaming along the road. The horsemen were in blue.

"Oh, hide, hide, hide!" cried the girl with a sob in her voice.

"Wait a minute," whispered a grey soldier excitedly. "Maybe they're going along by. No, by thunder, they hain't! They are halting. Scoot, boys!"

They made a noiseless dash into the dark end of the barn. The girl, standing by the door, heard them break forth an instant later in clamorous whispers. "Where'll we hide? Where'll we hide? There hain't a place to hide." The girl turned and glanced wildly about the barn. It seemed true. The stock of hay had grown low under Santo's endless munching and from occasional levying by passing troopers in grey. The poles of the mow were barely covered, save in one corner, where there was a little bunch.

The girl espied the great feed-box. She ran to it and lifted the lid. "Here! Here!" she called. "Get in here."

They had been tearing noiselessly around the rear part of the barn. At her low call they came and plunged at the box. They did not all get in at the same moment without a good deal of a tangle. The wounded men gasped and muttered, but they at last were flopped down on the layer of feed which covered the bottom. Swiftly and softly the girl lowered the lid, and then turned like a flash toward the door.

No one appeared there, so she went closer to survey the situation. The troopers had dismounted and stood in silence by their horses. A grey-bearded man, whose red cheeks and nose showed vividly above the whiskers, was strolling about with two or three others. They wore double-breasted coats, and faded yellow sashes were wound under their black leather sword-belts. The grey-bearded soldier was apparently giving orders, pointing here and there.

Mary tip-toed to the feed-box. "They've all got off their horses," she said to it. A finger projected from a knot-hole near the top, and said to her very plainly, "Come closer." She obeyed, and then a muffled voice could be heard: "Scoot for the house, lady, and if we don't see you again, why, much obliged for what you have done."

"Good-bye," she said to the feed-box.

She made two attempts to walk dauntlessly from the barn, but each time she faltered and failed just before she reached the point where she could have been seen by the blue-coated troopers. At last, however, she made a sort of a rush forward, and went out into the bright sunshine.

The group of men in double-breasted coats wheeled in her direction at the instant. The grey-bearded soldier came toward her. She stopped; she seemed about to run away. But the soldier doffed his little blue cap and looked amiable. "You live here, I presume?" he said.

"Yes," she answered.

"Well, we are obliged to camp here for the night, and as we've got two wounded men with us, I don't suppose you'd mind if we put them in the barn."

"In—in the barn?"

He became aware that she was agitated. He smiled assuringly. "You needn't be frightened. We won't hurt anything around here. You 'll all be safe enough."

The girl balanced on one foot and swung the other to and fro in the grass. She was looking down at it. "But—but I don't think Ma would like it if—if you took the barn."

The old officer laughed. "Wouldn't she?" said he. "That's so. Maybe she wouldn't." He reflected for a time and then decided cheerfully, "Well, we will have to ask her anyhow. Where is she? In the house?"

"Yes," replied the girl; "she's in the house. She—she'll be scared to death when she sees you."

"Will you go and ask her, then," said the soldier, always wearing a benign smile. "You go and ask her, and then come and tell me."

When the girl pushed open the door and entered the kitchen, she found it empty. "Ma!" she called softly. There was no answer. The kettle was humming its low song. The knife and the curl of potato-skin lay on the floor.

She went to her mother's room and entered timidly. The new, lonely aspect of the house shook her nerves. Upon the bed there was a confusion of coverings. "Ma!" called the girl, quaking in fear that her mother was not there to reply. But there was a sudden turmoil of the quilts, and her mother's head was thrust forth. "Mary," she cried, in what seemed to be a supreme astonishment, "I thought—I thought——"

"Oh, Ma!" blurted the girl; "there's over a thousand Yankees in the yard, and I've hidden three of our men in the feed-box." The elder woman, however, upon the appearance of her daughter, had begun to thresh hysterically about on the bed, and wailed.

"Ma," the girl exclaimed, "and now they want to use the barn—and our men in the feed-box! What shall I do? Ma, what shall I do?"

Her mother did not seem to hear, so absorbed was she in her grievous flounderings and tears. "Ma!" appealed the girl. "Ma!"

For a moment Mary stood silently debating, her lips apart, her eyes fixed. Then she went to the kitchen window and peeped. The old officer and the others were staring up the road. She went to another window in order to get the proper view of the road, and saw that they were gazing at a small body of horsemen approaching at a trot and raising much dust. Presently she recognised them as the squad which had passed the house earlier, for the young man with the dim yellow chevrons still rode at their head. An unarmed horseman in grey was receiving their close attention. As they came very near to the house, she darted to the first window again. The grey-bearded officer was smiling a broad smile of satisfaction. "So you got him?" he called out. The young sergeant sprang from his horse, and his brown hand moved in a salute. The girl could not hear his reply. She saw the unarmed horseman in grey stroking a very black moustache, and looking about him coolly with an interested air. He appeared so indifferent that she did not understand he was a prisoner until she heard the grey-beard call out: "Well, put him in the barn. He'll be safe there, I guess." A party of troopers moved with the prisoner towards the barn.

The girl made a sudden gesture of horror, remembering the three men in the feed-box.

III.

Over in front of the barn three troopers sat talking comfortably. Their carbines were leant against the wall. At their side and outlined in the black of the open door stood a sentry, his weapon resting in the hollow of his arm. Four horses saddled and accoutred were conferring with their heads close together. The four bridle-reins were flung over a post.

Mary had intended to go and tell the commander in blue that her mother did not wish his men to use the barn at all, but she paused when she heard him speak to the sergeant. She thought she perceived then that it mattered little to him what her mother wished, and that an objection by her or by anybody would be futile. She saw the soldiers conduct the prisoner in grey into the barn, and for a long time she watched three chatting guards and the pondering sentry. Upon her mind in desolate weight was the recollection of the three men in the feed-box.

It seemed to her that in a case of this description it was her duty to be a heroine. Plainly, a heroine would take measures to rescue the four men. If she did not at least make an attempt, she would be false to those carefully constructed ideals which were the accumulation of years of dreaming.

SITTING THERE COMFORTABLY, THE THREE SURVEYED HER WITH AMUSEMENT.

But the situation puzzled her. There was the barn with only one door, and with four armed troopers in front of this door, one of them with his back to the rest of the world, engaged, no doubt, in a steadfast contemplation of the calm man, and, incidentally, of the feed-box. She knew, too, that even if she should open the kitchen door three heads, and perhaps four, would turn casually in her direction. Their ears were real ears.

One by one she saw the gorgeous contrivances and expedients of fiction fall before the plain homely difficulties of this situation. Sadly, ruefully, she thought of the calm man and of the contents of the feed-box.

The sum of her invention was that she could sally forth to the commander of the blue cavalry, and, confessing to him that there were three of her friends and his enemies secreted in the feed-box, pray him to let them depart unmolested. But she was beginning to believe the old greybeard to be a bear. It was hardly probable that he would give this plan his support. It was more probable that he and some of his men would at once descend upon the feed-box and confiscate her three friends. The difficulty with her idea was that she could not learn its value without trying it, and then in case of failure it would be too late for remedies and other plans. She reflected that war made men very unreasonable.

All she could do was to stand at the window and mournfully regard the barn. She admitted this to herself with a sense of deep humiliation. She was not then made of that fine stuff, that mental satin, which enables some other beings to be of such mighty service to the distressed. She was defeated by a barn with one door, by four men with eight eyes and eight ears—trivialities that would not impede the real heroine.

The vivid white light of the broad day began slowly to fade. Tones of grey came upon the fields, and the shadows were of lead. In this more sombre atmosphere the fires built by the troops down in the far end of the orchard grew more brilliant, becoming spots of crimson colour in the dark grove.

The girl sat in the new gloom of the kitchen and watched. The soldiers lit a lantern and hung it in the barn. Its rays made the form of the sentry seem gigantic. Horses whinnied from the orchard. There was a low hum of human voices. Sometimes small detachments of troopers rode past the front of the house. The girl heard the abrupt calls of the sentries. She fetched some food and ate it from her hand, standing by the window. She was so afraid that something would occur that she barely left her post for an instant.

Once she felt that she had made up her mind to reconnoitre, at any rate. It was night; the lantern at the barn and the camp-fires made everything without their circles into masses of heavy mystic blackness. She took two steps toward the door. But there she paused. Innumerable possibilities of danger had assailed her mind. She returned to the window and stood wavering. At last she went swiftly to the door, opened it, and slid noiselessly into the darkness.

For a moment she regarded the shadows. Down in the orchard the camp-fires of the troops appeared precisely like a great painting, all in reds upon a black cloth. The voices of the troopers still hummed. The girl started slowly off in the opposite direction. Her eyes were fixed in a stare; she studied the darkness in front for a moment before she ventured upon a forward step. Unconsciously, her throat was arranged for a sudden scream. High in the tree branches she could hear the voice of the wind, a melody of the night, low and sad, the plaint of an endless incommunicable sorrow. Her own distress, the flight of the men in grey—these near matters as well as all she had known or imagined of grief—everything was expressed in this soft mourning of the wind in the trees. At first she felt like weeping. This song told her of human impotency and doom. Then later the trees and the wind breathed strength to her, sang of sacrifice, of dauntless effort, of hard carven faces that did not blench when duty came at midnight or at noon.

She turned often to scan the shadowy figures that moved from time to time in the light at the barn door. Once she trod upon a stick and it flopped, crackling in the intolerable manner of all sticks. At this noise, however, the guards at the barn made no sign. Finally, she was where she could see the knot-holes in the rear of the structure gleaming like pieces of metal from the effect of the light within. Scarcely breathing in her excitement, she glided close and applied an eye to a knot-hole. She had barely achieved one glance at the interior before she sprang back shuddering.

For the unconscious and cheerful sentry at the door was swearing away in flaming sentences, heaping one gorgeous oath upon another, making a conflagration of his description of his troop-horse.

"Why," he was declaring to the calm prisoner in grey, "you ain't got a horse in your hull —— army that can run forty rods with that there little mare."

As in the outer darkness Mary cautiously returned to the knot-hole, the three guards in front suddenly called in low tones, "Sssh! Quit, Pete, here comes the lieutenant." The sentry had apparently been about to resume his declamation; but at these warnings he suddenly posed in a soldierly manner.

A tall and lean officer with a smooth face entered the barn. The sentry saluted primly. The officer flashed a comprehensive glance about him. "Everything all right?"

"All right, Sir."

This officer had eyes like the points of stilettoes. The lines from his nose to the corners of his mouth were deep, and gave him a slightly disagreeable aspect; but somewhere in his face there was a quality of singular thoughtfulness as of the absorbed student dealing in generalities, which was utterly in opposition to the rapacious keenness of the eyes which saw everything.

Suddenly he lifted a long finger and pointed. "What's that?"

"That? That's a feed-box, I suppose."

"What's in it?"

"I don't know. I——"

"You ought to know," said the officer sharply. He walked over to the feed-box and flung up the lid. With a sweeping gesture he reached down and scooped a handful of feed. "You ought to know what's in everything when you have prisoners in your care," he added, scowling.

During the time of this incident the girl had nearly swooned. Her hands searched weakly over the boards for something to which to cling. With the pallor of the dying she had watched the downward sweep of the officer's arm, which after all had only brought forth a handful of feed. The result was a stupefaction of her mind. She was astonished out of her senses at this spectacle of three large men metamorphosed into a handful of feed.

IV.

It is perhaps a singular thing that this absence of the three men from the feed-box at the time of the sharp lieutenant's investigation should terrify the girl more than it should rejoice her. That for which she had prayed had come to pass. Apparently, the escape of these men in the face of every improbability had been granted her, but her dominating emotion was fright. The feed-box was a mystic and terrible machine, like some dark magician's trap. She felt it almost possible that she should see the three weird men floating spectrally away through the air. She glanced with swift apprehension behind her, and, when the dazzle from the lantern's light had left her eyes, saw only the dim hillside stretched in solemn silence.

The interior of the barn possessed for her another fascination, because it was now uncanny. It contained that extraordinary feed-box. When she peeped again at the knot-hole, the calm grey prisoner was seated upon the feed-box, thumping it with his dangling careless heels, as if it were in no wise his conception of a remarkable feed-box. The sentry also stood facing it. His carbine he held in the hollow of his arm. His legs were spread apart, and he mused. From without came the low mumble of the three other troopers. The sharp lieutenant had vanished.

The trembling yellow light of the lantern caused the figures of the men to cast monstrous wavering shadows. There were spaces of gloom which shrouded ordinary things in impressive garb. The roof presented an inscrutable blackness save where small rifts in the shingles glowed phosphorescently. Frequently, old Santo put down a thunderous hoof. The heels of the prisoner made a sound like the booming of a wild kind of drum. When the men moved their heads, their eyes shone with ghoulish whiteness, and their complexions were always waxen and unreal. And there was that profoundly strange feed-box, imperturbable with its burden of fantastic mystery.

Suddenly from down near her feet the girl heard a crunching sound, a sort of a nibbling, as if some silent and very discreet terrier was at work upon the turf. She faltered back; here was no doubt another grotesque detail of this most unnatural episode. She did not run, because physically she was now in the power of these events. Her feet chained her to the ground in submission to this march of terror after terror. As she stared at the spot from whence this sound seemed to come, there floated through her mind a vague, sweet vision, a vision of her safe little room in which at this hour she usually was sleeping.

The scratching continued faintly and with frequent pauses, as if the terrier was then listening. When the girl first removed her eyes from the knot-hole, the scene appeared of one velvet darkness; then gradually objects loomed with a dim lustre. She could now see where the tops of the trees joined the sky, and the form of the barn was before her, dyed in heavy purple.

She was even about to shriek, but no sound came from her constricted throat. She gazed at the ground with the expression of countenance of one who watches the sinister moving grass where a serpent approaches.

Dimly she saw a piece of sod wrenched free and drawn under the great foundation beam of the barn. Once she imagined that she saw human hands, not outlined at all, but sufficient in colour, form, or movement to make subtle suggestion.

Then suddenly a thought that illuminated the entire situation flashed in her mind like a light. The three men, late of the feed-box, were beneath the floor of the barn, and were now scraping their way under this beam. She did not consider for a moment how they could have come there. They were marvellous creatures. The supernatural was to be expected of them. She no longer trembled, for she was possessed upon this instant of the most unchangeable species of conviction. The evidence before her amounted to no evidence at all; but nevertheless, her opinion grew in an instant from an irresponsible acorn to a rooted and immovable tree. It was as if she was on a jury.

She stooped down hastily and scanned the ground. There she indeed saw a pair of hands hauling at the dirt where the sod had been displaced. Softly, in a whisper like a breath, she said "Hey!"

The dim hands were drawn hastily under the barn. The girl reflected for a moment. Then she stooped and whispered, "Hey! It's me!"

After a time there was a resumption of the digging. The ghostly hands began once more their cautious mining. She waited. In hollow reverberations from the interior of the barn came the frequent sounds of old Santo's lazy movements. The sentry conversed with the prisoner.

At last the girl saw a head thrust slowly from under the beam. She perceived the face of one of the three miraculous soldiers from the feed-box. A pair of eyes glinted and wavered; then, finally, settled upon her, a pale statue of a girl. The eyes became lit with a kind of humorous greeting. An arm gestured at her.

Stooping, she breathed "All right?" The man drew himself silently back under the beam. A moment later the pair of hands resumed their cautious task. Ultimately the head and arms of the man were thrust strangely from the earth. He was lying on his back. The girl thought of the dirt in his hair. Wriggling slowly and pushing at the beam above him, he forced his way out of the curious little passage. He twisted his body and raised himself upon his hands. He grinned at the girl and drew his feet carefully from under the beam. When he at last stood erect beside her, he at once began mechanically to brush the dirt from his clothes with his hands. In the barn the sentry and the prisoner were evidently engaged in an argument.

The girl and the first miraculous soldier signalled warily. It seemed that they feared their arms would make noises in passing through the air. Their lips moved, conveying dim meanings. In the sign language the girl described the situation in the barn. With guarded motions, she told him of the importance of absolute stillness. He nodded, and then in the same manner he told her of his two companions under the barn floor. He informed her again of their wounded state, and wagged his head to express his despair. He contorted his face to tell how sore were their arms, and jabbed the air mournfully to express their remote geographical position.

This signalling was interrupted by the sound of a body being dragged or dragging itself with slow swishing sound under the barn. The sound was too loud for safety. They rushed to the hole and began to semaphore wildly at it, but the swishing continued with serene indifference until a shaggy head appeared with rolling eyes and quick grin.

With frantic downward motions of their arms, they suppressed their grin, and with it the swishing noise. In dramatic pantomime they informed this head of the terrible consequences of so much noise. The head nodded, and painfully but with extreme care the second man pushed and pulled himself from the hole.

In a faint whisper the first man said, "Where's Sim?"

The second man made low reply, "He's right here." He motioned reassuringly toward the hole.

When the third head appeared, a soft smile of glee came upon each face, and

the mute group exchanged expressive glances. When they all stood together free from this tragic barn, they breathed a long sigh that was contemporaneous with another smile and another exchange of glances.

One of the men tip-toed to a knot-hole and peered into the barn. The sentry was at that moment speaking. "Yes, we know 'em all. There isn't a house in this region that we don't know who is in it most of the time. We collar 'em once in a while—like we did you. Now, that house out yonder, we——"

The man suddenly left the knot-hole and returned to the others. Upon his face, dimly discerned, there was an indication that he had made an astonishing discovery. The others questioned him with their eyes, but he simply waved an arm to express his inability to speak at that spot. He led them back toward the hill, prowling carefully. At a safe distance from the barn he halted, and as they grouped eagerly about him, he exploded in an intense undertone. "Why that—that's Cap'n Sawyer they got in yonder."

"Cap'n Sawyer!" incredulously whispered the other men.

But the girl had something to ask. "How did you get out of that feed-box?" A man turned to her at once. "Oh! the feed-box?" He smiled. "Well, when you put us in there, we was just in a minute when we allowed it wasn't a mighty safe place, and we allowed we'd get out. And we did. We skedaddled round and round until it 'peared like we was going to get cotched, and then we flung ourselves down in the cow-stalls where it's low-like—just dirt floor—and then we just naturally went a-whooping under the barn-floor when the Yanks come. And we didn't know Cap'n Sawyer by his voice no-how. We heard 'em discoursing, and we allowed it was a mighty pert man, but we didn't know that it was him. No, M'm."

These three men, so recently from a situation of peril, seemed suddenly to have dropped all thought of it. They stood with sad faces looking at the barn. They seemed to be making no plans at all to reach a place of more complete safety. They were halted and stupefied by some unknown calamity.

"How do you raikon they cotch him, Sim?" one whispered mournfully.

"I don't know," replied another in the same tone. The girl was staring at the barn. Suddenly she turned and whispered: "Who is he?"

"He's Cap'n Sawyer, M'm," they told her sorrowfully. "He's our own Cap'n. He's been in command of us yere since a long time. He's got folks about yere. Raikon they cotch him while he was a-visiting."

She was still for a time, and then, awed, she said: "Will they—will they—hang him?"

"No, M'm. Don't raikon no such thing. No, M'm."

The group became absorbed in the contemplation of the barn. For a time no one moved or spoke; at last the girl was aroused by slight sounds, and, turning, she perceived that the three men who had so recently escaped from the barn were now advancing toward it.

V

The girl waiting in the darkness expected to hear the sudden crash and uproar of a fight as soon as the three creeping men should reach the barn. When she arrived, however, she gazed about her, bewildered. The men were gone. She searched with her eyes, trying to detect some moving thing, but she could see nothing.

Left alone again, she began to be afraid of the night. The great stretches of darkness could hide crawling dangers. From sheer desire to see a human, she was obliged to peep again at the knot-hole. The sentry had apparently wearied of talking; instead, he was reflecting. The prisoner still sat on the feed-box, moodily staring at the floor. The girl felt in one way that she was looking at a ghastly group in wax. She started when the old horse put down an echoing hoof. She wished the men would speak—their silence reinforced the strange aspect. They might have been two dead men.

The girl felt impelled to look at the corner of the interior where were the cow-stalls. There was no light there save the appearance of peculiar grey haze which marked the track of the dimming rays of the lantern. All else was sombre shadow. At last she saw something move there. It might have been as small as a rat or it might have been a part of something as large as a man; at any rate it proclaimed that something in that spot was alive. At one time she saw it plainly and at other times it vanished, because her fixture of gaze caused her occasionally greatly to tangle and blur those peculiar shadows and faint lights. At last, however, she perceived a human head: it was monstrously dishevelled and wild. It moved

slowly forward until its glance could fall upon the prisoner and then upon the sentry. The wandering rays caused the eyes to glitter like silver. The girl's heart pounded so that she put her hand over it.

The sentry and the prisoner remained immovably waxen, and over in the gloom the head thrust from the floor watched them with its silver eyes.

Finally the prisoner slid from the feed-box, and, raising his arms, yawned at great length. "Oh, well," he remarked, "you boys will get a good licking, if you fool around here much longer. That's some satisfaction, anyhow. Even if you did bag me, you'll get a good walloping." He reflected for a moment and decided: "I'm sort of willing to be captured if you fellows only get a damned good licking for being so smart."

The sentry looked up and smiled a superior smile. "Licking, hay, Nixey?" He winked exasperatingly at the prisoner. "You fellows are not fast enough, my boy. Why didn't you lick us at ——, and at ——, and at ——?" He named some of the great battles.

To this the captive officer blurted in angry astonishment: "Why, we did!"

The sentry winked again in profound irony. "Yes — I know you did. Of course. You whipped us, didn't you? Fine kind of whipping that was! Why, we——"

He suddenly ceased, smitten mute by a sound that broke the stillness of the night. It was the sharp crack of a distant shot that made wild echoes among the hills. It was instantly followed by the hoarse cry of a human voice, a far-away yell of warning, singing of surprise, peril, fear of death. A moment later there was a distant fierce spattering of shots. The sentry and the prisoner stood facing each other, their lips apart, listening.

The orchard at that instant awoke to sudden tumult. There was the thud and scramble and scamper of feet, the hollow, swift clash of arms, men's voices in question, oath, command, hurried and unhurried, resolute and frantic. A horse sped along the road at a raging gallop. A loud voice shouted: "What is it, Ferguson?" Another voice yelled something incoherent. There was a sharp discordant chorus of command. An uproarious volley suddenly rang from the orchard. The prisoner in grey moved from his intent listening attitude. Instantly the eyes of the sentry blazed, and he said, with a new and terrible sternness: "Stand where you are."

The prisoner trembled in his excitement. Expressions of delight and triumph bubbled to his lips.

"A surprise, by Gawd! Now — now you'll see!"

The sentry stolidly swung his carbine to his shoulder. He sighted carefully along the barrel until it pointed at the prisoner's head, about at his nose.

"Well, I've got you, anyhow. Remember that. Don't move."

The prisoner could not keep his arms from nervously gesturing.

"I won't; but——"

"And shut your mouth."

The three comrades of the sentry flung themselves into view.

"Pete—devil of a row!—can you——"

"I've got him," said the sentry calmly, and without moving. It was as if the barrel of the carbine rested on piers of stone. The three comrades turned and dived into the darkness.

In the orchard, it seemed as if two gigantic animals were engaged in a mad floundering encounter, snarling, howling in a whirling chaos of noise and motion. In the barn, the prisoner and his guard faced each other in silence.

As for the girl at the knot-hole—the sky had fallen at the beginning of this clamour. She would not have been astonished to see the stars swinging from their abodes, and the vegetation, the barn, all blown away. It was the end of everything, the grand universal murder. When two of the three miraculous soldiers who formed the original feed-box corps emerged in detail from the hole under the beam and slid away into the darkness she did no more than glance at them.

Suddenly she recollected the head with silver eyes. She started forward and again applied her eyes to the knot-hole. Even with the din resounding from the orchard, from up the road and down the road, from the heavens and from the deep earth, the central fascination was this mystic head. There to her was the dark god of the tragedy.

The prisoner in grey at this moment burst into a laugh that was no more than an hysterical gurgle. "Well, you can't hold that gun out for ever. Pretty soon you'll have to lower it."

The sentry's voice sounded slightly muffled, for his cheek was pressed against the weapon. "I won't be tired for some time yet."

The girl saw the head slowly rise, the eyes fixed upon the sentry's face. A tall black figure slunk across the cow-stalls

and vanished back of old Santo's quarters. She knew what was to come to pass. She knew this grim thing was upon a terrible mission, and that it would appear again at the head of the little passage between Santo's stall and the wall, almost at the sentry's elbow, and yet, when she saw a faint indication as of a form crouching there, a scream from an utterly new alarm almost escaped her.

The sentry's arms, after all, were not of granite. He moved restively. At last he spoke in his even unchanging tone. "Well, I guess you'll have to climb into that feed-box. Step back and lift the lid."

"Why, you don't mean——"

"Step back!"

The girl felt a cry of warning arising to her lips as she gazed at this sentry. She noted every detail of his facial expression; she saw, moreover, his mass of brown hair bunching disgracefully about his ears, his clear eyes lit now with a hard cold light, his forehead puckered in a mighty scowl, the ring upon the third finger of the left hand.

"Oh, they won't kill him. Surely they won't kill him." The noise of the fight at the orchard was the loud music, the thunder and lightning, the rolling of the tempest which people love during the critical scene of a tragedy.

When the prisoner moved back in reluctant obedience he faced for an instant the entrance of the little passage, and what he saw there must have been written swiftly, graphically in his eyes. And the sentry read it and knew then that he was upon the threshold of his death. In a fraction of time certain information went from the grim thing in the passage to the prisoner and from the prisoner to sentry. But at that instant the black formidable figure across, towered and made its leap. A new shadow flashed across the floor when the blow was struck.

As for the girl at the knot-hole, when she returned to sense she found herself standing with clenched hands and screaming with all her might.

As if her reason had again departed from her, she ran around the barn, in at the door, and flung herself sobbing beside the body of the soldier in blue.

The uproar of the fight became at last coherent, inasmuch as one party was giving shouts of supreme exultation. The firing no longer sounded in crashes: it was now expressed in spiteful cackles, the last words of the combat, spoken with feminine vindictiveness.

Presently there was a thud of flying feet. A grimy, panting, red-faced mob of troopers in blue plunged into the barn, became instantly frozen to attitudes of amazement and rage, and then roared in one great chorus: "He's gone!"

The girl who knelt weeping beside the body upon the floor turned toward them her lamenting eyes and cried—

"He's not dead, is he? He can't be dead?"

They thronged forward. The sharp lieutenant who had been so particular about the feed-box knelt by the side of the girl and laid his head against the chest of the prostrate soldier.

"Why, no," he said, rising and looking at the man. "He's all right. Some of you boys throw water on him."

"Are you sure?" demanded the girl.

"Of course. He'll be all right after a while."

"Oh!" said she softly, and then looked down at the sentry. She started to arise, and the lieutenant reached down and hoisted rather awkwardly at her arm.

"Don't you worry about him. He's all right."

She turned her face with its curving lips and shining eyes once more toward the unconscious soldier upon the floor. The troopers made a lane to the door, the lieutenant bowed, the girl vanished.

"Queer," said a young officer. "Girl very clearly worst kind of a rebel, and yet she falls to weeping and wailing like mad over one of her enemies. Be around in the morning with all sorts of doctoring, you see if she ain't. Queer."

The sharp lieutenant shrugged his shoulders. After reflection he shrugged his shoulders again. He said: "War changes many things, but it doesn't change everything, thank God."

Ragged · & · Torne · & · True

I AM a poore man, God knowes,
And all my neighbours can tell,
I want both money and clothes,
And yet I live wondrous well:
I have a contented mind,
And a heart to beare out all,
Though fortune (being unkind)
Hath given me substance small.
Then hang up sorrow and care,
It never shall make me rue:
What though my back goes bare?
I'me ragged, and torne, and true.

A · BALLAD · OF · THE · SEVENTEENTH · CENTURY

A BOOTE of Spanish leather
I have seene set fast
in the stockes,
Exposed to wind and weather,
And foul reproach and mocks.
While I in my poore ragges
Can passe at liberty still:
O fie on these brawling bragges,
When money is gotten so ill!
O fie on these pilfering knaves!
I scorne to be of that crue;
They steale to make themselves braves;
I'me ragged, and torne, and true.

I HAVE scene a gallant goe by
With all his wealth on his backe,
He look't as loftily
As one that did nothing lacke;
And yet he hath no meanes
But what he gets by the sword,
Which he consumes on queanes;
For it thrives not, take my word.
O fie on these highway thieves!
The gallowes will be their due:
Though my doublet be rent i' th' sleeves,
I'me ragged, and torne, and true.

SOME do themselves maintaine
With playing at cards and dice:
O fie on that lawlesse gaine
Got by such wicked vice!
They coozen poore countrey-men
With their delusions vilde,
Yet it happens now and then
That they themselves beguilde;
For if they be caught in a snare
The pillory claimes its due.
Though my jerkin be worne and bare,
I'me ragged, and torne, and true.

THE hostler, to maintaine
Himselfe with money in's purse,
Approves the proverbe true,
And says, Gramercy horse:
He robs the travelling beast,
That cannot divulge his ill;
He steales a whole handfull at least
From every halfe-peck he should fill.
O fie on these cozening scabs,
That rob the poore jades of their due!
I scorne all theeves and drabs,
I'me ragged, and torne, and true.

TIS good to be honest and just,
Though a man be never so poore;
False dealers are still in mistrust,
Th'are afraid of the officer's doore:
Their conscience doth them accuse,
And they quake at the noise of a bush;
While he that doth no man abuse
For the law needs not care a rush.
Then welfare the man that can say,
I pay every man his due:
Although I go poore in array,
I'me ragged, and torne, and true.

Photo by Howell and Morrison, Liverpool.

THE YOUNG COURTIER.

BABY WALTERS' LAPSUS LINGUÆ.

By EDWARD NOBLE.

"LARRY!"

"Hallo, Baby!"

"H-s-s-h! Mind the chief doesn't twig you; stand out of the moonlight."

"How did you get planted there?"

"The chief spotted me speaking to Bella. Then he examined me on the stars—*Crux*, and *a* and *b centauri*, and all that lot. I told him all right till I got to *b centauri*. Then I got mixed up, thinking of Bella, I suppose." Baby sighed heavily from his perch on the skidds as he spoke.

"What did you tell him then?"

"Oh! I think I said *B* stood for Bella, and that it meant 'beautiful sentinel.'"

"Baby, you didn't!"

"I'm afraid I did, Larry."

"Was he mad?"

"I don't know. He spluttered a minute and then growled out something about making a confounded crux of me!"

"That's why you are crucified, then?"

"I suppose so. Larry!"

"Well?"

"Could you shin up the staunchion and get nearer? He couldn't see you from the poop, because of the cross-jack tack."

In a few minutes Larry was crouching beside his spread-eagled companion. There was a moderate, whole-sail breeze, and the *Walton Castle* was shimmering through the moonlit waters of the South Atlantic trades on her outward passage to Melbourne.

It was a lovely night, nearly four bells in the first watch, and the young moon growing towards the western horizon.

"Baby!"

"Hallo!"

"Do you think the chief is—is—gone on Bella?"

"No! Do you?"

"It seems funny he should plant you like this for nothing," remarked the astute Larry.

"But it wasn't for nothing, Larry."

"Well, no—*B* may mean Bella, and *bella centauri* may mean 'beautiful sentinel,' but that is not enough to be crucified for."

"Larry—if I thought that," groaned the outspread Baby, "I would—I would fill his sea-boots with shot; and I'd pour my whack of molasses into the sleeves of his mess-jacket. Oh! I *would* make him look a swell."

"Nonsense, Baby; don't bother; perhaps it's all my fancy. When are you coming down?"

"I don't know."

"And there's——"

"Yes; that's just it. I've promised to meet her at six bells. It will soon be that; and even if I were down, I'm as stiff as a capstan bar. You couldn't rub my arms a bit, Larry, could you?"

"Where?"

"Oh, anywhere—all down, and my back, too; it's awful stiff where that stun'sail boom sticks into it."

"Is that better?" asked Larry after a lengthy period given over to massage.

"Yes. That's all right. Now it must be six bells. Oh, how am I going to manage it? Larry"—as a bright thought struck him—"couldn't you go up to the chief and apologise for me? Say I'm beastly sorry, and as stiff as thunder, and that it's *beta centauri*—not Bella."

"I'll try," said Larry. Then he slid down from his perch and walked up the poop-ladder.

The chief and a junior officer were walking slowly up and down the weather-side of the deck, looking out into the night. Seeing Larry approach they stopped.

"Well, what do you want?" questioned the chief.

"If you please, Sir—Baby—that is, Walters—says he can remember about the Southern Cross sentinels now and he's very sorry—and can he come down because he's as stiff as a—as a spare topmast, Sir, and I don't believe he meant it."

Larry jerked the whole sentence out as he stood before the chief just as though he had learned it by heart. It was an ordeal, but the lad emerged from it creditably for all that.

"No!" said the chief shortly, "Walters can cool his heels a bit longer yet. These youngsters are quite incorrigible," he continued to the third officer. "They give more trouble than all hands put together."

Then they recommenced their walk, and Larry sneaked off disconsolately to his chum on the skidds.

"It's no use, Baby," he whispered, "the chief's got his nose out of joint about something."

"Oh! won't I jam up his boots for him," groaned Baby. "Larry!"

"Well?"

"How *am* I going to meet her—I must, you see—it's very urgent."

"I couldn't do anything for you, I suppose?"

"You might, Larry—if—if you'd be very careful it *was* for me, you know."

Larry did not answer.

"You see," Baby continued reluctantly, "it's an awkward place where we meet generally; it's in the mizzen chains, you know. Her port looks out number three from for'ard, and there are no lights, and how can she tell it's me?"

"Tell me what I've got to do, Baby, quick! it's close on six bells."

"Well," said Baby reluctantly; "you'll crawl along the chains *under* the other ports, and crouch down by No. 3; then you'll just tap lightly on the window, and she'll open it, then—well, Larry, you'll do it for me, won't you?"

"Do what?" said Larry.

"Why, just kiss her—once, you know—quite softly; and if you wouldn't mind not doing any more, but just say, 'H-s-s-s-h!' quietly—she will understand that you can't stop, that someone may catch you, or that you have something to do—then she will let you come away."

"Is that all, Baby?"

"Yes, old boy; only it's *for* me, you know—honour bright and all that. I shouldn't bother, only, Larry, I can't bear to think of her lying awake all night, you know, just because—just because—I haven't given her—her good-night kiss."

"Do you think she would?" queried Larry doubtfully.

"I'm sure of it," returned Baby from his elevation, "or do you think I would send you to kiss her for me?" Baby groaned as he writhed his stiff arms on their capstan-bar support.

Just then six bells sounded, and Larry vanished across the silent deck on his errand of mercy. The moon was sinking behind the glowing western horizon when he crept over the bulwarks, and, clinging to the mainbrace, cautiously stole aft in the shadow of the rail towards the chains. Beneath him the water sang softly as it eddied and bubbled from the ship's side, wreathing in myriad fantastic forms of phosphorescent radiance. But Larry was not thinking of the beauties of the water, or the night. His soul was completely engrossed with the difficulties attendant on giving that kiss, and escaping unquestioned.

"Suppose she should twig the difference! All fellows don't mug the same way," he soliloquised as he crawled beneath the first two great square ports.

"If she does, then it's all up. Girls always shriek and go into fainting-fits when the wrong chap——"

He stopped. There was a sound of a window being raised. For in the fine weather the ports were triced up, leaving only the windows inside as a protection.

"Jeminy!" growled Larry under his breath, "she's awake." Then he listened intently, lying flat in the chains.

"Baby!" The voice was very low and sweet. To Baby it would have rung like an angel's whisper. To Larry it was incomprehensibly flustering. Then to his other fears there came the dread that he might not answer aright. He had not thought of having to speak. He paused, considering, then whispered, "Darling!" waiting amid heart tremors to see if he had chanced on the right key—and term.

"Darling Baby!" Evidently it was all right.

There was a pause. He did not know what to venture next, so he repeated "Darling!" with as much simulated affection as he could assume.

A little white hand crept out into the darkness, fluttering towards him. The breeze from under the chains caught the white sleeve that covered her pretty round arm, exposing the blue-veined wrist. Larry took it in his own, and reaching out to the sweet face that lay framed in the open port, whispered—

"H-s-s-s-h!" Then he kissed her—kissed her right on the lips, and it was all over.

Had the darkness allowed him, he would have seen the delicate brows arch in wonder, and the dainty bow-like mouth pucker with surprise. For the lips are very sensitive—especially the lips of such as Bella.

"Why, Baby!" she whispered; "you've grown a moustache."

Larry never felt so proud in his life.

"I've had it for months!" he returned, forgetful of his identity with the smoother-faced Baby. "At least, that is—I——" he stammered, then faltered and broke down.

The little white hand was quickly withdrawn, and a long gasp of astonishment broke from Bella.

"Say!" whispered Larry, quickly forgetting all else in his desire for secrecy; "you aren't going to faint—or shriek—or——!"

"You are a horrid wretch!" gasped Bella. "No, I am not going to faint; but I hate you, *Mister* Dudley! I'll never speak to you again."

"I'm glad you aren't going to faint," said Larry; "and I'm sorry I have upset you. But you'll try to go to sleep, please, because Baby is very miserable about not being able to come, and——"

"Baby's miserable, is he?" quoth Bella sceptically. "Then why — why didn't—he come—himself?"

"Baby's crucified!" said Larry remorsefully.

"Oh, Larry!"

"Hush!" whispered Larry; "the chief will hear you, and then there *will* be a jubilee."

HE KISSED HER RIGHT ON THE LIPS.

"But—but," sobbed Bella in quick distress, "you said—that Baby's cru-cru-cified!"

"Oh, but it's not with nails, you know," said the anxious Larry, "it's only stun'sail booms and capstan bars, and rattline stuff, and all that!"

"Only!" cried Bella. "Larry, I'm

ashamed of you. You wouldn't care if Baby died, I suppose?"

This was so obviously unjust that Larry could only shrink back closely against the ship's side, and glare at the water eddying beneath him.

"I'm afraid I shall get giddy if I stay here," he remarked at random; "do you think you have anything to send him—any message, you know—because I might give it to him when I—when I rub him down presently."

"Rub him down! why?" cried Bella, with open eyes.

"Oh, it's stiff, you know, being crucified; fellows always get their chums to rub them down."

"Oh!" cried Bella, "and I'm keeping you all this time, when you might be helping him. Oh, what shall I do? what can I send him?"

"Got any manavalins?" asked the practical Larry.

"Any what?"

"Manavalins—cakes, sweets, you know. It'll help pass the time while he's spread out."

"Larry," said Bella, "you are a dear! I believe I almost like you."

Then she disappeared, leaving Larry to wonder over the inconsistencies of the sex. "Just now," he growled, "she told me I was a beast, and now—" but his ruminations were cut short by Bella's fluttering presence at the window again.

"Here," she cried, "here's some cake, and an orange, and a piece of tart the steward put in my room to-night. Give them to Baby with—with—my love—and——" Bella paused.

"Anything else?" queried Larry, after a brief interval occupied by tucking the manavalins inside the bosom of his shirt.

"Yes, my love, and I hope it doesn't hurt dreadfully."

"Anything else?"

"I don't think so," said Bella, "unless you would mind—taking—a——"

"Kiss?" said Larry.

"Y—e—s."

"He'd like it, Bella, I know—stick it on my forehead—he would—rather I carried it that way," said Larry. Then he leaned forward and Bella's two white hands fluttered out of the port, taking his face between them, and a gentle kiss was planted on the boy's brow.

Then the window shut, and Larry went creeping away under the neighbouring ports with as much gravity as if he had been balancing a spare stun'sail boom on his forehead, instead of being the honoured convoy of a gentle, maidenly kiss.

But Bella could not sleep. The thought of Baby crucified, even without nails, was too distressing altogether. She tossed and tumbled in her narrow bunk most restlessly. Her long dark hair got mixed up somehow with her tears. Her face was wet. The pillow was wet. Pretty Bella was crying.

Presently she raised herself on her elbow. Her soft flushed face was the picture of sweet determination.

"I know what I will do," she whispered. "I will see Mr. Stewart. Perhaps, if I ask him, he will let Baby off."

Lighting the swinging candle when she was fully dressed, Bella peeped into the other bunks. Her smaller sisters lay rosily comfortable—fast asleep. Then, opening the cabin-door, she glided quickly to the companion, and so across to the "break of the poop." From that elevation the outspread Baby was distinctly visible. Bella's sympathies welled to her pretty dark eyes. "It's a shame!" she cried distressfully.

"What's a shame?" asked the chief, who, seeing her cross the deck, had approached unheard.

"That people should have to stay up all night, that others can be asleep," said Bella, quickly recognising the danger of too eager partisanship with the crucified Baby. "Are you the officer of the watch, Mr. Stewart?"

"I was until you came," returned the chief, eyeing the pretty girl wistfully.

"Why can't they anchor ships at night?" asked Bella evasively.

"I wish we could," said the chief; "then, perhaps, we should be able to amuse you better. It's rather dull below, Miss Rodney?"

"No—I was asleep—but it's very hot. I could not rest properly, so I thought I would come on deck a little while to get cool, you know. It's very dreadful, isn't it, Mr. Stewart, but you won't mind, will you?"

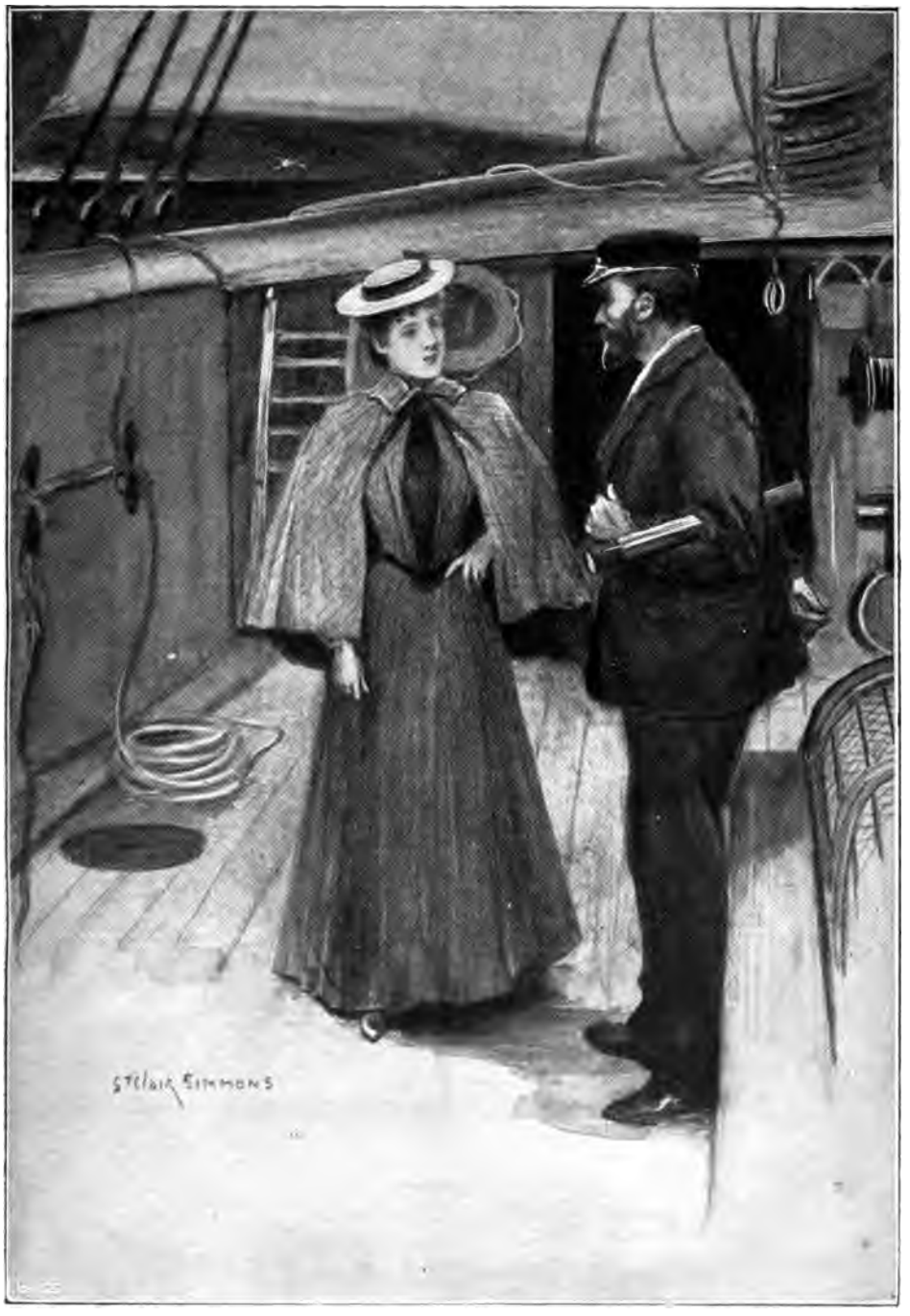
"I wish I might say what I think, Miss Rodney."

"Oh, but you won't," said Bella, scenting a pitfall, "you will be very kind, please, and tell me about the ship."

"About the ship?"

"Yes, please: what is that dark thing over there?" asked Bella, pointing to where the boats sat on the skidds.

"That's a compass. The 'standard,' you know."



"ARE YOU THE OFFICER OF THE WATCH, MR. STEWART?"

'Oh!" said Bella; "and what is that dark shadow to the right of it?"

"Where do you mean?"

"There!" said Bella, pointing directly at Baby.

"Oh, that," said the chief, "is an oil-skin coat, I think."

"I don't think it is," said Bella.

"We can't be looking at the same thing," said the chief. "Which do you mean?"

"I only see one—over there!" said Bella.

"That! Oh, that 's a scarecrow."

"I didn't know you had scarecrows on board ship," said Bella wistfully. "They aren't real, I suppose—not alive, that is?"

"Hum!" remarked the chief thoughtfully. "Yes, they are—generally."

"I suppose *you* make them scarecrows, don't you, Mr. Stewart?"

"Well—sometimes. You see, we are bound to keep discipline, Miss Rodney—we——"

"Oh! I 'm so sorry I interfered—I didn't mean to. You see, I 'm only a girl. and I couldn't help thinking that perhaps—perhaps the scarecrows have sisters—and—and——"

"Lovers?" said the chief.

"Mothers!" said Bella; "and they would be so sorry if they knew. Don't you think they would, Mr. Stewart?"

"Yes," returned the chief slowly; "perhaps they would, but then they don't know."

"Don't you think they do?" Bella asked very wistfully, with a small tremor in her voice.

Then she turned to go below. "Thank you for what you have told me, Mr. Stewart. Everything about ships is very interesting. I think I am cooler now—and will go below. Good night."

She held out her small hand. The chief took it, bending over it a moment.

"Good night, Miss Rodney," he said; then he coughed, the night air was chilly, and he had grown suddenly husky. "There won't be any more scarecrows—this voyage!"

"Nor ever?" questioned Bella wistfully.

"Nor ever," answered the chief.

There was a soft rustling of daintier caparisonings than generally are to be heard on quarterdecks at midnight. Then Bella vanished to her room, leaving the chief to walk quickly over the heads of the sleeping passengers awhile.

"By gad," he growled, "one would think she knew who the scarecrow is! But—she is right."

He called the third officer, telling him to keep a look-out; then descended to the main deck softly, and stood looking up from under the skidds.

"Give us another bite," said Baby; "it's awful good tucker."

"Better than the flap-jacks we get," said Larry. "Mind the jam!"

"Did you bring anything else?" asked Baby.

"Yes. It was on my forehead, though. I thought you would like it best if I brought it that way."

"Sure?" questioned Baby suspiciously.

"Honour bright, old chap."

The chief stepped out from the shadows of the boats. Larry was leaning across from his perch beside Baby, feeding him with a great hunch of tart.

"Come down out of that!" cried the chief. "You, Dudley, what are you doing there?"

"Baby 's hungry, Sir," quoth the ready Larry.

"Very well, get him down too; and don't let me have any more nonsense. Hungry?" he growled, as he turned to go aft again. "By gad! and she half persuaded me I was an inhuman brute!"

GREAT MEN IN LITTLE WORLDS.

By GEORGE GISSING.

I.—OUR LEARNED FELLOW-TOWNSMAN.

IT was the title that, for some fifteen years, had been tacked to the name of Percy Marfleet whenever he was mentioned in the local newspapers. Not undeservedly, for in his knowledge of books he much surpassed the leading men of the town, and his life was entirely devoted to study. Miss Cloud, the borough member's daughter, who had been at Girton, herself the marvel of womanhood in this not altogether benighted region, spoke of Mr. Marfleet with respect; indeed, for the last twelvemonth or so it had been generally surmised that the friendship between these distinguished persons would end in closer alliance—a most interesting and delightful prospect. The lady had entered upon her twenty-seventh year; Marfleet drew towards forty, but preserved the complexion and the carriage of youth. For him, such a union would in every way be advantageous, as, from his way of living, he evidently possessed but a modest competence, while Miss Cloud shone as the sole heiress of her father's fortune.

For a man of parts and ambition, raised above the necessity of exerting himself to earn a livelihood, it is dangerous, after academic success, to return to his native country-town and settle there with the purpose of productive study. As a rule, men have no such temptation; Percy Marfleet, whose bent of mind was all towards homeliness, and who shrank from the tumult of the great world, even while crediting himself with power to win distinction, decided after a very brief trial of London that he could not do better than go back to the scenes of his youth, where kindly notice would inspire him, where his health would be at its best, and where a modest income would, he imagined, assure him a much better status than among strangers. His family had a good name in the town; since the death of his parents and the marriage of his sister, upon him alone lay the duty of keeping the name in honourable prominence. Moreover, he owned the house in which he had been born, where the days of his boyhood had been passed. With infinite contentment he read the newspaper paragraph which made known that "Mr. Percy Marfleet, the son of our late honoured townsman, having completed a distinguished career at the University of Cambridge," had returned to the town, and intended to make it his permanent abode.

From his earliest school-prize to the final honours at Cambridge, each step of Percy's progress had been chronicled by the local paper. No special brilliance appeared in the successive achievements: he had done well, nothing more; but local pride made much of his academic record. He was understood to be great in "history"; to historic study his life would be dedicated; if he ran up to London or to Cambridge, the newspaper announced that he was gone for the purpose of "consulting original documents." At first, he declined to take any part in the affairs of the town, for which he had absolutely no leisure; but little by little certain honours were thrust upon him, and the satisfaction of making little speeches, carefully prepared and no less carefully reported, lured his mind from exclusive occupation with the past. At length he could be depended upon for an annual lecture at the Literary Society, for an address here or there, for the active patronage of any enlightened movement—unconnected with politics. From strictly municipal business he succeeded in holding aloof, his true reason being fear of expense; but, this prudence notwithstanding, the esteem he enjoyed necessarily cost him something in coin of the realm, and such demands upon his pocket grew heavier and more frequent with the progress of time. The day came when Percy had seriously to consider his financial position. Seeing no immediate way out

of the difficulty, and feeling so comfortable in his daily life that a complete change could hardly be thought of, he insensibly drifted into carelessness of the future. And so it came about that, in his thirty-eighth year, having long lived upon capital, with steady growth of expenditure from Christmas to Christmas, he saw before him an inevitable crisis. Income he no longer possessed; merely a sum of money which, even with parsimonious management, could last him only a short time, and at the present rate of living would dissolve with awful rapidity.

In the way of literary production he had done nothing. Years ago he made no secret of his undertaking: the work of his life was to be a continuation of Macaulay; latterly he very seldom spoke on this subject, or even distantly alluded to it. Since his thirtieth year scarcely a jotting had been added to the notes and rough sketches previously accumulated. Nowadays he only read, and for the most part his reading had no connection with historic research. A large library, collected at no small outlay, gathered dust upon the shelves. Expensive publications still reached him, simply because he lacked the courage to discontinue his subscriptions, and so to confess that his one object in life had melted away, together with his money. He spent the wonted number of hours locked in his study, but more often than not a day dragged through in sluggish mooning or in the tortures of anxiety. As usual, he pottered about the garden; as usual, he paid and received visits, attended meetings, made little speeches, helped to get up little entertainments of an intellectual cast. And no fellow-townsman marked the slightest change in him.

One hope remained; yet it could hardly be called a hope: rather, a troubled imagination of something that might have fallen to his lot in happier circumstances. Until of late no thoughts of marriage had lured or perturbed him; he cared but moderately for the society of women, and, like most men of his temper, kept very clearly in view the sacrifices and perils attaching to wedlock; his pleasant, roomy house, always quiet and fragrant under the rule of an excellent domestic, would undergo such changes if a mistress entered into possession. For all that, there was one woman who often occupied his thoughts, and in some degree had power over his emotions; in part because of her social rank, partly because of her education, and, last but not least, by virtue of her personal charm. Certainly he liked Eveline Cloud; he was flattered by the deference she paid him, and felt something very attractive in the modesty with which she spoke of her own attainments. By slow degrees their intimacy had grown and ripened. At first he was slightly afraid of her; the smile ever lurking about her lips seemed to threaten criticism of an unfamiliar keenness: who could say what equipment of modern views these young ladies brought with them from Girton? Gradually he perceived that Eveline's position in the town was somewhat like his own—that her prestige rested upon vague report rather than on present evidence of learning and ability. He judged her intelligent, but certainly not profound. Nor did she make parade of erudition; her tastes seemed decidedly simple; if he mistook not, she preferred the companionship of her provincial friends to the society she met when with her father in London. Her interest in local concerns became more pronounced; she was fervent in orthodoxy, and, as years went on, accepted with decision her place as leading lady in social or charitable organisations. Personally, Miss Cloud no longer overawed him, for he felt that he understood her. Her behaviour to him was of such frank friendliness that no wonder their acquaintances observed them with a genial smile. Marfleet sometimes came away from the house brooding. But for his incredible folly, which had brought him within sight of disaster he saw no means of repairing, might he not reasonably have aspired to a marriage which would at once exalt his position and promote his happiness? What possibility of it now? The secret, of which no one had a suspicion, weighed but the more heavily upon his own mind.

In conversation one day with Miss Cloud, he chanced to speak of some political incident in the reign of Queen Anne, a point which it seemed to him the historians had misunderstood.

"Have you reached that in your book?" asked Eveline, with a glance of interest.

His eyes dropped; he was uncomfortably aware of that lurking smile about the fresh-coloured lips.

"In the first rough draft," he constrained himself to answer. And Eveline's eyes reassured him, so friendly were they, so devoid of troublesome curiosity.

"Have you never thought, Mr. Marfleet, of publishing portions of your work in the periodicals—as some writers do?"

Yes, he had thought of it, and very lately. To be sure, no portion of his work was written, but might it not be possible to shape out of his notes a few interesting chapters, which the reviews would print and pay for? Miss Cloud's happy suggestion had a strong effect upon him; it revived his energies, and for the next few weeks he actually engaged in literary composition. He wrote a paper of some length, and dispatched it to the editor of an important monthly. What was more, so sanguine had he become in consequence of this effort, that he revealed the matter to Miss Cloud.

"I am delighted!" was her exclamation—and she really looked it. "When do you think it will appear?"

"Oh," he faltered, "impossible to say. Perhaps—it might not strike the editor as worth much."

"What! the result of years and years of study! That 's impossible." And Eveline added: "I have noticed, Mr. Marfleet, that you seem rather despondent of late."

They were alone on one of the garden terraces, and Eveline's voice had an intonation of peculiar gentleness. A more ardent admirer or less scrupulous man would have used the opportunity; Marfleet merely grew confused.

"It 's nothing. I wasn't aware of its——"

"I 'm afraid you work too hard," sounded in the soft, kindly accents.

"Oh dear no!" He laughed. "I feel perfectly well—perfectly."

And, indeed, there was little amiss in his appearance. He had a pleasant colour, a clear eye, the excellent teeth of a healthy man who did not smoke. For years he had gone to bed at eleven o'clock and risen only at nine; he had never fallen short in exercise, ate heartily, and found plenty of amusement. It would take a long time before mental distress such as he was now suffering wrote itself upon his countenance. No one thought it unnatural for Miss Cloud to take an interest in Mr. Marfleet; decidedly he was a personable man, well set up, well featured, and always carefully dressed. Eveline,

HE WALKED ABOUT THE STREETS WITH A REVIVAL OF BODILY VIGOUR, AND SAW HIS POSITION FROM QUITE A CHANGED POINT OF VIEW.

for her part, could not be called handsome; but for her position, suitors would hardly have singled her from a group of amiable-looking young women. Yet the good blood in her veins, the kindly, intelligent light of her eyes, and that lurking smile, wrought durable bonds for the heart of any man once thoroughly subdued to their charm.

Not long after this conversation Miss Cloud went with her father to town, where she remained for more than three months. For nearly the same period Percy Marfleet lived in uncertainty as to the fate of his historical essay, and the time passed drearily enough. When Eveline's return grew near he resolved to make inquiry of the silent editor, and a speedy reply put an end to his suspense. The editor regretted that he could not make use of Mr. Marfleet's interesting paper, which he now sent back. It was a blow to Marfleet, and after a few days spent in recovering from dizziness, the poor fellow took a dark resolve.

While he still had a little money left he would go to London, and there, as a literary man at anyone's disposal, face the struggle for existence.

No need to make known his intention to the old friends. His departure should be explained as a temporary removal to London for purposes of study. In a month or so he could write that circumstances obliged him to stay in town for an indefinite period; his library should be sent up as if for use, but really for sale; and the house there would be no difficulty in letting for some fifty pounds a year—just enough, if the worst came to the worst, to save him from destitution. Of course, he must break the habits and the connections of a lifetime; unless he were so fortunate as to establish himself in a decent literary career, of which he had painfully little hope. The probability was that he would come to be thankful for hack work at the British Museum, such as he himself had occasionally employed a poor devil to do, ere yet the day of evil dawned on his life.

The resolve taken, he bore up manfully. All he had to do before actually leaving the town was to go through his papers, destroying and packing, and meanwhile to wear the accustomed face. Not a soul suspected him. He even took the chair at the annual meeting of the Literary Society, and made a speech which was considered brilliant. Not the faintest hint that he might be obliged to sever his connection with this and other local organisations. Two days later "our learned fellow-townsman" was reported as usual in the borough press, with wonted encomium; and Marfleet smiled dolefully as he glanced at the familiar column.

He knew the day of Miss Cloud's return; the day before would see his departure. To meet her, and answer questions about his historical essay, was a humiliation he could not endure. Doubtless, she had mentioned the matter to other people, and this disaster alone would have been all but sufficient to drive him into exile. How foolish to have spoken of his attempt! But it was all one, now. On the last day he sat hour after hour in his study, totally unoccupied, his mind a miserable blank; he sat till late at night, and on going to bed had but snatches of unrefreshing sleep. Early next morning, when only the humbler classes of the townsfolk were about, a cab conveyed him to the station. His servants understood that he would be away for two or three weeks—nothing more. When the moment came for breaking up the establishment, he must rely upon his sister, or her husband, resident a few miles out of the town, to transact the necessary business for him. Before mid-day he arrived in London, and went first of all to an hotel where he was known; but before nightfall he had searched for and settled upon a lodging; modest, as befitted his humble prospects. The address, however, was not such as would excite surprise when communicated to his friends.

Oddly enough, the next day brought him an access of cheerful, even sanguine spirits. Though late in December, the weather was remarkably bright; he walked about the streets with a revival of bodily vigour, and saw his position from quite a changed point of view. After all, was not this supposed calamity the very best thing that could have befallen him? Down yonder he was merely rusting, sinking into premature old age; here, "in streaming London's central roar," his energies would rise to the demand upon them. Pooh! as if such a man as he could not make a place for himself in literary life! There were at least two or three old college friends with whom he might renew intimacy—men pretty well to the front in various callings, and more likely than not able to be of use to him. He had done most unwisely in neglecting those early acquaintances. Nay—he saw it now—he ought never to have made his home in that dull little country town, where ignorant flattery and facile triumphs fostered all the weaknesses

of his temperament. Heaven be thanked, he was not yet forty, and his resources would last till he had got an independent footing. Ho, ho! How many a poor devil would be glad to exchange positions with him!

This mood lasted for about a week; a long time, considering that Marfleet lived alone in lodgings, and permitted his landlady to supply him with meals. But he was sustained by the renewal of acquaintance with two of those old friends of his, who really seemed quite glad to meet him again, and asked him to dinner, and talked as men do whom the world has provided with store of goods. To these men he by no means revealed the truth, but fell into their complacent tone, and spoke for the most part as if all were well with him. The second week saw him meditative, and inclined to solitude—which he had so little difficulty in securing. He now reproved himself for having struck a false note with his genial friends; it would be doubly hard to ask their advice or assistance. The weather, too, had turned to normal wretchedness, and his rooms were cold, dark, depressing. He began to suffer from indigestion, the natural result of his landlady's meals. Then a bilious headache and a severe catarrh simultaneously seized upon him; he could not go out, and just as little could think of inviting anyone to come and see him in his dreary durance.

Recovered from these transitory ills, he saw the solid features of his situation in a gloomier light than ever. It was folly to postpone the decisive step; he must dismiss his servants, sell his library, let the dear old home as soon as possible. He tried to write the fateful letter, but his hand dropped. There came a moment when, as he sat by the alien fireside, bitter thoughts were too much for him, and his eyes filled with despairing tears.

Percy Marfleet lived thus for a month. Day by day home-sickness ate into his heart; day by day the great, roaring, fog-choked city crushed his soul and became unutterably hateful. In imagination he visited the beloved house, sat in his library, walked about his garden; heard the voices of companionable men and women, above all, the voice of Eveline Cloud; took the chair at the Literary Institute, listened to friendly proposals that he should stand for this or that ward at the next municipal elections. What a Christmas he had passed! And how delightful it always was, the Christmas of old times! And so it came to pass that, on a day, he found himself at the railway station; in one hand a travelling-bag, clasped in the other a ticket for his native town. Why he was going back, he knew not; enough that he was booked and would see his home again this very night.

He reached it at nine o'clock. He rang a merry peal at the front door, and, when the door opened, had much ado not to embrace his honest, smiling housekeeper.

"No, no, Mrs. Robinson; it's all right. I didn't send notice—had to come unexpectedly. And how are you, eh? Cold night—ah, but how good the air tastes! Fire in the study, is there? Splendid! Something to eat—hungry—ha, ha, ha!"

Mrs. Robinson felt a strange suspicion. She had never known her master to exceed becoming limits in the matter of strong drink; but really—— And he had such an unaccountable look; dark eyes; sunken cheeks: utterly unlike himself. At his supper, too, he drank a great deal of bottled beer; after it he called joyously for whisky. And there he sat until long after midnight, singing to himself snatches of old songs.

The next morning—it was frosty and bright—he went forth, walked through the town, greeted cheerily such friends as he chanced to encounter. As though bent on a country walk, he crossed the bridge and passed at his usual brisk pace through the suburb of mean little houses; from the highway beyond he struck into a field path, and by way of a great semicircle drew towards the point he had in mind, which he might have reached in a quarter of the time by starting on another route. He was going to call upon Miss Cloud. With what purpose, he did not try to make clear to himself; he must see Eveline; that was the immediate necessity of a life which had lost all conscious self-direction.

Mr. Cloud's residence, built but a few years ago, stood amid a young plantation, and at this time of the year had a chilly aspect. As he walked up the shrub-bordered drive, Marfleet felt a misgiving, and when his hand was on the bell he asked himself abruptly why he had come; but the speedy opening of the door gave him no time to answer the question. Miss Cloud, as he knew, was at present living alone, unless there happened to be some female relative in the house, for her father had gone to London again after the Parliamentary recess. As a matter of course he was straightway led to the drawing-room, and in a moment Eveline joined him.

"How delightful, Mr. Marfleet! I was just wishing that I could see you, but had no idea you were back again. Will you come into the library? There's a bit of crabbed old law-Latin I can't understand at all——"

For some time Eveline had been making a study of the antiquities of the town, and in her last conversation with Marfleet she had laughingly suggested that they should collaborate on a local history. By good luck (he trembled with apprehension) the man of learning was able to solve this present difficulty, and the feat exhilarated him; his countenance became that of one who had not a care in the world.

"You have been a long time in London," said Eveline, with one of her shy glances. Alone with Marfleet, she always looked rather shy, however spirited her talk.

"Yes—a month or so. And I think I must go back again. In fact, Miss Cloud, I have all but made up my mind to live there altogether."

The announcement startled her so much that she looked at him in silence—looked at him for a moment fixedly. Marfleet was swaying on his feet and twisting his hands together behind him; he talked on with nervous rapidity and vigour.

"The truth is, I'm not getting on so well with my work as I ought to be. For a long time—it's a shameful confession—I have been shockingly idle. Do you think our climate is just a trifle relaxing? I'm afraid I must take a decided step; really, I'm afraid I must. After all, London is the place for work; don't you think so? In the country one has so many temptations to indolence. I mean——"

He grew confused, and began to swallow his words.

"I can quite understand," said Eveline in a low voice as she stood before him with head bent, "that you feel the need of—of more intellectual society. You must find us very dull."

"No, no, no!" he exclaimed in agitation. "I meant nothing of the kind. The society is delightful. I was thinking of the—the libraries and that kind of thing—the general atmosphere of——"

"THERE, NOW, THAT IS WHAT I CAME THIS MORNING TO TELL YOU."

"I quite understand." Eveline was eager to justify him. "For a serious student the advantages of London are very great. Of course, I am very sorry, but——"

A crisis of nervous torture drove the man to plain speech.

"Miss Cloud, the matter is more serious than you could suspect. You remember the paper I wrote—for the review? It was rejected."

The word seemed to echo from every surface of the room. Eveline stood motionless, and durst not raise her eyes.

"You can imagine how that affected me," he rushed on, with hot cheeks. "It made me aware of my culpable folly. Miss Cloud, you say that I must feel the society of your town dull. Oh, if you will believe me, how gladly I would live here for the rest of my days! This is my home; I love it. London will always be a miserable exile. If you knew how I felt last night on coming back! If I could but stay here, and lead the same quiet, happy life——"

His voice grew thick, and he had to pause. Eveline looked at him with gentle surprise, and her breath came quickly as she spoke.

"You feel it a duty to use your great gifts——"

"I will tell you the whole wretched truth. I cannot stay here. I have been living like a simpleton—spending twice my income. I must go to London to earn a living. There, now, that is what I came this morning to tell you."

And he laughed as if it were an excellent joke.

"Mr. Marfleet——"

Even on those lips his name had never sounded so pleasantly. He gazed at her and waited.

"Don't you think," she proceeded, with diffidence yet with courage, "that it's a great pity for towns like ours to lose all their most capable men? Wouldn't it be much better if—such a man as yourself were to stay, and use his talents in the service of the place he loves and the people he cares for? We are so much in want of a higher type of mind——"

"Ah, if it were possible! I regret bitterly that I did not enter into the life of the town in earnest, years and years ago."

Eveline's smile came from its lurking-place, and made sunny all her sweet countenance.

"You would have been mayor by now. And think how much better for all of us!"

"I would give years of my life," exclaimed Marfleet, "if that could be!"

"Is it *really* impossible?"

Their eyes met. Eveline, sister to the rose, trembled as if on the verge of happy laughter. Marfleet, his face radiant yet ashamed, tried vainly to speak.

"Who knows of your difficulties?" she asked softly.

"Not a soul but you."

She did not laugh, but again seemed scarce able to help it. Marfleet's hand stole forth, and was met half-way.

"We will write the history of our town!" broke joyously from his lips.

Drawn by Constance Foxley.

MY kit had been stuffed into a pair of saddle-bags, which comprised all the impedimenta I carried with me; my two horses stood saddled in the stable; and I had enlisted the services of a young Armenian to guide me through the mountains to Pernakaban. All I required was a permit to quit the town.

As soon as I had got through a hasty meal, I hurried up to the Kishlah. I ascended the familiar staircase on the left, under the archway, reached the lofty, spacious corridor, and told the Governor's servant to announce me. I was received at once.

I found Ismaïl Hakki, surnamed "The Kourt," or wolf, on account of his ferocity in dealing with offenders who fell into his clutches, seated on the floor in a corner, with his back resting against the divan. He was taking his ease. He had discarded his uniform, and wore baggy linen drawers with a loose printed calico jacket quilted with cotton wool.

There were two other persons on chairs in the centre of the room when I entered—Hussein Pasha, an elderly artillery general in uniform, and a civilian, an influential Turk of Erzeroum, who acted as a kind of secretary to the Governor and Commander-in-Chief.

His Excellency and his companions gave me a cordial greeting. Cigarettes and steaming tea served in glasses, with thin slices of lemon swimming at the top, in Russo-Persian style, were brought in

and handed round, and not until these had been disposed of and we had indulged in some minutes' commonplace conversation, did I venture, in accordance with Turkish custom, to state the real object of my visit at that untimely hour; for it was after sunset.

I told the Pasha I had been at Chiflik since the morning, and had witnessed the Russian advance and the skirmish; that as the telegraph-wires were cut and postal communication interrupted, my presence in Erzeroum became useless, and it was my duty to get away without further delay. I therefore begged to ask for a pass to leave the town.

Endeavours were made to persuade me to remain and share the lot of the besieged; but at last the Governor, seeing I had made up my mind, put an end to the discussion by remarking "Peckee," which means "Very good," and inquired what road I proposed taking since Illidjah was occupied by the Russians.

I replied that there was a road running at the foot of the mountains which border the town on the southern side, and after winding through the hills to the west, touches the highway somewhere in the vicinity of Hash Kalch.

"But who will you take to guide you?" he asked.

"I've engaged a guide," I said.

"Who is he?"

I told him.

"He does not know the way," exclaimed the Pasha; "and, besides, I cannot think of allowing you to leave in that manner. If you insist on going I will give you a cavalry escort, with a man among them familiar with the roads, who will take you safe and sound to Pernakaban. When do you think of setting out?"

"To-night."

"You had better stay till daybreak."

"I would rather go to-night."

"Very well," said the Pasha.

"I believe General Kemball is at Pernakaban?" he resumed.

"He was there," I replied, "according to the last advices."

"Then I will give you a letter for him."

* * * *

At two o'clock the next morning the escort, consisting of four men and a corporal, came to my door, and ten minutes afterwards I was on the pigskin.

It was in the early part of January. The morning was bitterly cold, and fine snow or mist was falling, which froze as it reached the ground. I had barely gone fifty yards when the young horse I was riding went sprawling on the slippery road and cast a shoe. The next mishap was the sudden and quite inexplicable illness of one of my men, and we were obliged to proceed to the barracks to change him.

At last we made a start, leaving the town on the south-western side, close to the Karamitlik Tabia, or fort. There were no regular ramparts there; only a breastwork similar to that connecting the forts in the plain at Kars, before that city passed into Russian hands, with an opening in it just the breadth of the road, and no gate.

Here two sentinels demanded my pass, and would have retained it had I allowed them. A little farther on we came to a long line of sentries, who summoned us to stop, and an officer advanced accompanied by a couple of soldiers. A candle was procured after some little difficulty, the pass duly perused, and we were then allowed to proceed, taking with us the good wishes of the guard; but we marched, I should think, half an hour, before we were quite quit of outposts.

The night was dark; there were plenty of stars overhead, but no moon, and we consequently had to make our way by such light as was afforded by the reflex of the small twinkling luminaries of the heavens on the snow.

It was terribly cold as we toiled along, one man riding in front to show the way—the one who knew the road—I after him, and the others coming behind me. It was a case of "follow my leader" with a vengeance. How "the leader" found the track I have always been at a loss to understand. I could see none, and yet I several times gazed intently towards the pure white sheet of crystalline flakes shrouding mother earth, in search of it. The guide only made one blunder, and then he led us into a field where our horses sank up to their knees in snow. The mistake was soon set right, and we got on our road again.

At the end of a couple of hours we heard the barking of dogs—an unmistakable sign a village was near at hand. Then we noticed a black patch ahead, which we soon made out to be trees. Finally we distinguished the outlines of those wretched-looking habitations one meets with in Anatolia, and a few paces more brought us to them.

The glimmer of a light came through the narrow loopholes of the first house we knocked at, and in response to the noise we were making a voice was heard

telling us a harem was located there for the night, and sending us to Gehenna.

We passed the harem on the road the next day. It comprised some eight or ten women mounted on horses, with a sort of tent over them, one of the fair creatures being wedged in a seat on either side of each animal, balancing one another, with rigorous injunctions not to move. The ladies were accompanied by three or four male attendants, who led the horses of the favourites, and of those who, being married, had a right to such consideration. There were a good many heavily laden baggage mules mixed up with the quadrupeds carrying the more priceless treasures, and one or two boys, girded with huge cavalry sabres, stretching their diminutive legs astride huge, well-stuffed saddle-bags that half hid the beasts carrying them.

A lieutenant led the van, and a major brought up the rear. It reminded one of a lot of hens sallying forth with a cockerel in front and an old rooster behind.

A SENTRY SUMMONED US TO STOP.

The village we had reached was Tousdji, lying on the northern slope of the Palantokhan mountains. After pummelling at the door of the house in which the harem had sought quarters, we proceeded to another, and eventually succeeded in awakening its inmates. I cannot say they hurried out in answer to our summons, but they did eventually draw the bolts, and

after the customary chatter, the master of the place conducted us to another dwelling which had a lieutenant and some half-dozen cavalry soldiers as guests, most of whom decamped when we made our appearance.

The people of the house brought in some stringy cheese, a few pieces of pancake bread, which they carefully arranged on a low table along with some *yaourt*, a kind of curds and whey. I smoked several cigarettes and chiboucks, gave the lieutenant all the news, discussed affairs in general with some of the principal Mohammedan inhabitants, who had left their beds in the middle of the night to come and see me, and finally rolled myself in my fur-lined travelling-coat and fell asleep beside the cowdung fire.

We did not get many hours' rest, for we were up again shortly after daybreak, and then discovered there was no barley to be had, so we gave the horses flour—which, to my surprise, they took to very kindly—and set out again.

We toiled along through the snow for a good many hours. The road went due west, following the base of the Palantokhan chain. At best it was a mere beaten track formed by cattle, horsemen, and the native carts, with wheels made of solid wood instead of spokes; and as we entered the narrow valley leading into the western hills, it become worse and worse. We had to cross frozen streams over ice that cracked beneath our horses' hoofs, and to pass along paths with deep snow on one side of us, and marsh land covered with a thin sheet of ice on the other. Our horses, which came of a Kurdish strain, were accustomed to bad roads, and hardly once made a false step or slipped as we hurried forward.

An hour after noon we reached a hamlet just beyond a defile in the Palantokhan chain through which the enemy were expected, and met a score or so of soldiers from Erzeroum, who, driving a number of ill-fed, diminutive ponies before them, were out foraging for fodder.

At two of the clock we were at Eusebek, and halted there a couple of hours, finding quarters in a spacious stable which had a small platform rising three or four feet above ground, railed off in a corner for the accommodation of human beings—the usual guest-house. A couple of hours later we set out again along a road which was still only a narrow pathway, formed by the tramp of horses in Indian file, with snow rising a foot and a half on either side of it.

After another two hours' toil we succeeded in climbing up to Arjucommon, a small village nestled among the hills. There we passed the night, and I had the usual talk with the host and chief inhabitants. As no barley was to be had, the horses were given flour for their evening feed and wheat in the morning.

A couple of hours after daybreak we continued our march. The roads were worse than ever. It had snowed throughout the night, and almost all the tracks were covered up. We were the first out, and soon discovered we should have begun the day later, and let someone else find the road before us.

We scrambled on for a long time, and at last caught sight of the Kara Sou—the Araxes—and very shortly afterwards reached the high road to Trebizond. To our right were Illidjah and the Russians, only four hours off—we had taken a day and a half to make the turning movement—to our left Hash Kaleh, Pernakaban and safety! It is almost needless to say we went to the left.

We followed the high road for some distance, passing numbers of half convalescent soldiers, who had been driven out of Erzeroum at the first alarm of investment, and told to find their way to Erzinghian, about which we have heard so much of late. The majority, of course, simply expired in the attempt.

At Ginnis, a small village just off the road on the left, I ordered a couple of fan-tailed sheep to be slaughtered and roasted whole, and had the satisfaction of regaling thirty or forty of these hungry, scantily clad men for the very modest outlay of about eight shillings. If ever anyone was blessed in this world, it was me.

Quitting Ginnis after a good rest, we dropped on to the Trebizond Road again opposite Karabouyuk Khan, which we found occupied by a detachment of Edhem Pasha's horse doing advanced post duty, one of the soldiers mounting guard on the roof, so as to obtain a better view across the plain.

We were barely on the highway when night set in. It continued frightfully cold, and the ground was dreadfully uneven, the snow having been trampled into regular ridges by the constant shuffling tread of horses. The only light to guide us was such as was shed by the stars and a very, very young moon. We got along, however, notwithstanding the semi-darkness and rugged road, and in three hours were at the large stone bridge which spans

THE PALANTOKHAN MOUNTAINS.

the Kara Sou, near a little hamlet half hidden amid the rocks, on the right-hand bank of the river. An hour afterwards we ambled into Hash Kaleh, where I found Edhem Pasha with four hundred cavalry.

The Pasha welcomed me kindly, notwithstanding the late hour, and when we had got through the inevitable glass of tea, when I had communicated to him what had happened at Erzeroum since his departure, and we had settled down to chiboucks and cigarettes, he abruptly turned to me and inquired—

"Would you like a glass of *arepa sou?*"

I almost had a fit. What? Beer? For *arepa* is Turkish for barley, whilst *sou* stands for water, and such is the name the Turks have given to our staple English beverage—barley-water!

Of course I answered "Yes."

"Very well," he said, "just take a bottle out of one of those bags."

My eyes followed the direction of the Pasha's finger, and at once fell on a couple of huge leather wallets that I had often noticed following his Excellency on the back of a sturdy mule.

To make the story intelligible to those unfamiliar with Mohammedan usages, I must recall the fact that all true believers in the Prophet are positively forbidden by the Koran to touch wine or spirits, but there is some doubt as to whether they may not drink beer, and it is generally conceded that they may.

Well, then, I moved across the room to the leather bags and drew from one of them a black bottle bearing a familiar label.

"Hum," I ejaculated *sotto voce*; "that's all right."

I very soon whipped my corkscrew out of my pocket and the cork out of that bottle. The aroma at once rose to my nostrils. I smelt the contents.

"Ye gods!" I inwardly murmured. "Three star brandy, and in a Pasha's baggage, too!"

Then I thought of Byron—

Champagne for women, claret for boys, but give me brandy.

"Pasha effendi!" I exclaimed, "Why, this is cognac!"

"Impossible!" he answered.

"Indeed it is," and I took a glass and poured a little into the bottom of it. It was brandy sure enough, and excellent brandy, too.

"Well, I suppose they have made a mistake," said the Pasha; "you'd better open another bottle."

I uncorked three. They were all brandy and all labelled beer!

"Well," said his Excellency after some meditation, "as they've made a mistake and there's no beer I suppose we must drink it"; and he concluded with the remark that Allah was great and Mahomet was his servant.

The artful dog!

I continued my journey early next morning, and reached Pernakaban a little before noon.

I found Sir Arnold Kemball at his quarters, along with his aide-de-camp, Lieutenant Dougall, R.N., handed him Ismail Pasha's letter, and gave him the news. I still remember the twinkle in his eye when I related the beer and brandy story, and how, turning to his aide-de-camp, he inquired—

"I say, Dougall, I wonder where he got it from; do you think we could get any?"

I had made up my mind to stay only an hour at Pernakaban—just sufficiently long, in fact, to give the horses a feed of corn and get a hasty snack myself, before pushing on over the Kop Dagh to the khan on the other side, and if possible to Evric.

I had only been about three-quarters of an hour in the place; I had just got my first spoonful of chicken-broth to my mouth, when a man rushed into the guest-house with the unwelcome news that the Russians were on us, and, seizing his traps, dashed out again.

I left the soup to the men, tore a leg off a fowl, gave orders for everything to be packed and the horses bridled, and sallied forth to verify the information. There could be no doubt as to its accuracy. Edhem Pasha's cavalry had been driven in and came hurrying through the village, the men urging their jaded, hungry steeds to their fastest amble.

Where were the Russians? They had entered Hash Kaleh two hours after I had left in the morning, and consisted of a couple of battalions of infantry, fifteen hundred cavalry and two guns—a strong reconnaissance.

I rode down the road until almost all our cavalry had passed me, and I met Sir Arnold Kemball retreating. Then I thought it wise to do the same.

The crossing of the Kop Dagh was awful. The snow lay many feet deep, it was frightfully cold, and the beautiful military highway along which I had ridden in the sultry summer was simply execrable. One had to keep a very tight rein and a very

high hand to prevent one's horse bowing to mother earth at every half-dozen yards.

We reached the opposite side of the mountain, however, without accident, and were at the Kop Khan before dusk. There I met Edhem Pasha, who was endeavouring to collect his scattered followers. We exchanged a hasty greeting — "*Salaam aleikam!*" "*Aleikam salaam!*" and I pushed on to Evric, a nice little village about two hours and a half from the khan, and a mile to the left of the high road.

When I cautiously descended from my steed I could hardly stand, my feet were so numbed with cold, notwithstanding fur-lined boots and cloth list wound round the stirrups.

We passed the night at Evric, and next day rode quietly on to Baïbourt.

THE SEED.

Bearing a life unseen,
Thou lingerest between
  A flower withdrawn,
And—what thou ne'er shalt see—
A blossom yet to be
  When thou art gone.

Unto the feast of Spring
Thy broken heart shall bring
  What most it craved,
To find, like Magdalen
In tears, a life again
  Love-lost—and saved!

JOHN B. TABB.

"NOW, DOUGLAS, LET MY HAND GO."

See "The Rectory Pew."

THE RECTORY PEW.

By NORA HOPPER.

"SOME more ivy, please, and a handful of that gold-berried holly. Oh! and, Douglas, won't you come and nail up this wreath for me?" said the Rector's eldest and prettiest daughter, looking plaintively up at her tall cousin as he swung open the door of the high, old-fashioned pew, and took the hammer and nails from her youngest sister's unskilful hands.

"All right, Nell. Lotty, I'll finish that for you directly. You'll only hammer your poor little fingers to pieces. Do you want the wreath to hang here, Nell?"

"Yes," Nell Varney said more gravely, "just above the tablet to poor mamma's memory. Thank you, Douglas. And as you're so tall, will you please see if that bunch of holly Lotty has just put up is firmly fixed? I don't want it to tumble down on me when I'm on my knees to-morrow morning."

"It's quite safe, Nell. Lotty knows her business well," Douglas Connah said, with a kind smile at sixteen-year-old Lotty, pricking her fingers loyally in a desperate attempt to carry out her sister's curt directions. Nell's own white fingers were too pretty to run the risk of scratches.

"I think it all looks very nice," Edie Varney said, with a tired look on her gentle face as she laid knife and scissors down, and began to pick up the leaves and berries scattered all over the floor of the pew. "Don't you think so, Douglas?"

"I haven't paid any attention to the general effect, Edie; I've been going in for details," Douglas Connah said, with another smile. "Come out, Nell, will you? and let us have a look round." He held the door open for his cousin to pass through, and followed her out into the centre aisle, where Edie and Lotty could neither have heard nor seen them from the tall rectory pew.

"Nell, shall we ever have another Christmas together, I wonder? I wish I could have spent Christmas Day here at least; but I shall have to make up my mind to it, of course. Will you miss me a little to-morrow, Nell darling?"

"Of course I shall," Nell pouted prettily.

"Nell, if we were not in church I should kiss you to death, I think."

Nell pouted again, not quite so prettily, and shrugged her shapely shoulders. "I'm glad you're so sensible," she said provokingly. "Now, Douglas, let my hand go; Edie will come out in a minute."

"What does that matter? Edie knows we are lovers, Nell."

"Edie knows nothing of the sort, Cousin Douglas."

"Not? But, Nell dearest——"

"Edie may know that you love me, perhaps; but that I love you she doesn't know. I don't know for certain myself yet. Indeed, Douglas"—she was not speaking flippantly now, and her tone was earnest—"I don't know yet. You must give me time."

"I'll give you all I can, my pretty Nell; but suppose I haven't much time left to give?"

"Douglas!" Nell Varney's blue eyes grew round with sudden fear. "What do you mean?"

"Why, Nell," the young man said very gently, "we sha'n't come out of this war in the Soudan without losing a few men, and I may be one of the few."

"You are trying to frighten me," Nell said doubtfully. "No. You are very unkind, Douglas, to talk about dreadful things, and—and you've made me very unhappy before this, just in the same way. I wonder you're not kinder, Douglas; you know I—I'm not very strong."

"I didn't intend to frighten you, my darling." Douglas Connah's brown eyes were very tender, if a little sad. "I'll ask of you only what you can give easily, Nell. Is that four o'clock striking?"

"Yes; and we dine at five. Edie, Lotty, come! Orchardson will put out the gas and lock the door." Nell raised her voice a tone or two. "Edie, why don't you come? I'm cold standing here, and so is Douglas."

"Nell, don't speak so loud!" Edie said, as she followed Lotty from the pew.

"We are in church, remember. Run on ahead, you three, if you are cold. I wish to speak to Orchardson."

"Do!" Douglas said pleasantly. "Race Lotty, won't you, Nell? I'll wait for Edie." Nell threw him an enigmatical look, and started off after Lotty at a brisk pace, while Douglas and Edie followed more slowly. "You're very quiet to-night," the young soldier said, drawing Edie's bare and scratched hand through his arm in brotherly fashion. "Tired, Edie?"

"A little. There's a good deal to do at Christmas, you see."

"There's always a good deal for Edie Varney to do, it seems to me," Douglas Connah said gently. "You're a perfect slave to duty, you plucky little Edie. Oh yes, I know you hate to be praised, but I'm a privileged person, you know. Edie, I wish I dare ask you to do something for me."

"Well, what is it?" There was a curious thrill in Edie's quiet voice, and the hand on her cousin's arm trembled, just for a moment. "I will do it if I can, Douglas; you know that, at least."

"I want you to be extra good to Nell when I am gone. Oh, I know *how* good you've been to her, Edie; but I want you to be extra kind to her. You see, my dear, she'll be lonely just at first. At least, I'm selfish enough to hope so."

"Yes."

"And Nell is such a sensitive, tender-hearted creature; she'll want mothering more than ever, Edie—for a little."

"Yes."

"You're not vexed with me, are you, Edie? You see, I love Nell so dearly—as dearly as you do—I won't say more dearly, for I know what you've been to her ever since Aunt Alice died, though Nell is a year older than you."

"Yes."

"There's a kind Edie! I shall go away with a lighter heart now I know——"

"Now you know—what?"

"That you'll mother Nell more than ever. And when I come back, if ever I do——"

"*If* you come back," Edie said with dry lips.

"I have a sort of fancy that I sha'n't," Douglas Connah said gravely. "If I don't, Edie, you'll—you'll help Nell to be happy without me. I wouldn't have her break her dear heart for my sake, Edie. Tell her that, dear, if I never come back; will you?"

"Yes."

"Here we are at the rectory, and there's Lotty waiting for us on the steps," Douglas said.

"Dear, good little Lotty!" Edie said, with a tremble in her quiet voice and a sudden mist of tears before her strained eyes. "She is such a comfort to us, Douglas; and sometimes I'm selfish enough to hope she will never marry—not as long as papa and I live, at least."

"Why, Edie, you forget you are a year younger than my Nell; and when you die of age, we shall all have to quake for fear," Douglas said lightly, and Edie broke out into an abrupt unmusical laugh. "Only think of it," she said mockingly. "I had forgotten Nell for a minute—I had actually forgotten your Nell. Go in and comfort her while I take my things off—poor little ill-used Nell!"

* * * *

The three Varney girls sat chattering together over the fire in Nell's bed-room—that is to say, Nell was talking and the other two were listening: Lotty lying back in her rocking-chair, with a palm-leaf fan held between her face and the fire, Edie moving about the room straightening the gloves and laces and ribbons that lay scattered on couch and dressing-table, and now and then giving a touch to the mass of gleaming white satin lying on the bed—Nell's wedding-gown.

"I'm so glad Denzil is coming to give me away," Nell's sweet voice went placidly on. "I always did like Denzil, you know, though you two *would* always laugh at him."

"Yes," Lottie said, fanning herself languidly, very much in Nell's own manner, "Denzil has money, and I don't suppose *he* will ever marry now. He remembers poor mamma too well."

Nell's delicate face flushed. "You don't mean Denzil," she said hotly. "You are hinting about Douglas—it—it is detestable of you, Lotty. It is two years since Douglas died—you know it is—and even Edie never blamed me. Did you, Edie?"

Edie's hand crept to her heart as she stood looking fixedly down at the wedding dress, and she answered in an odd, breathless way—

"I never did. I knew you—too well. *He* would not—have you break your heart—for him. He said so." Nell began to cry softly, but the smile on Lotty's pretty lips only deepened.

"*Nell's* heart? Poor Douglas!"

"You are very, very unkind," Nell sobbed. "I'm glad I'm going away

SHE STOOD LOOKING FIXEDLY DOWN AT THE WEDDING DRESS.

to-morrow from all of you. Even Edie has been different to me since——"

"Since when?" Edie turned round with such a look in her eyes as made Nell's querulous words die on her lips. Lotty leaned back in her chair, and began to laugh maliciously, as she watched Nell's pretty flushed face. "Do think of your looks to-morrow," she entreated satirically. "What will Colonel Vyner think if he sees you with a red nose and swollen eyelids? And what will your feelings be,

my poor Nell? Pray, pray take care of your looks; they are your only fortune, my pretty sister."

"This is my room," Nell said indignantly. "Please go, Lotty. Edie can stop with me, if she likes."

"Edie *doesn't* like," Lotty said, rising with a yawn. "Come, Edie; I want to try on my hat; there's something about the feathers that I don't like. Don't be afraid, Nell"—airily kissing her fingers to the bride-elect as she crossed the room towards the door—"I mean to do you credit, you bonny bride. Shall I, Edie?"

"What?"

Lotty put her arms round her sister's shoulders and walked her across the passage into the bed-room they shared, and so up to the dressing-table.

"Look in the glass, Edie, and answer me honestly: shall I do Nell credit or not?"

Edie looked obediently, and remained staring at her sister's reflection as if fascinated. She had never noticed Lotty very closely before; but to-night the girl looked absolutely lovely. There was a vivid scarlet bloom on the thin brown cheeks, the brown eyes were alive with light under their delicately marked brows, and the red-brown hair was rippling softly

FOR SOME TEN YEARS MORE LOTTY SAT ALONE IN THE HAUNTED PEW WHILE HER YOUTH AND BEAUTY FORSOOK HER.

over the broad forehead, that was too high for beauty.

"Shall I do Nell credit?" Lotty asked again ;. "or will my eighteen years shame her twenty-three? Eh, Edie?"

Edie recalled Nell's rounded outlines, her pink and white skin, her large blue eyes and pouting lips, and in her mind she gave the palm to Lotty, though she only said, "You look very nice, dear. Why, Lotty," for there was a tear on Lotty's long black eyelashes. "Lotty dear——"

"What does it matter?" Lotty said, looking at herself with a bitter smile on her fresh young lips. "I am going to be beautiful, Edie—and I don't care now. And it might have been so different."

"My dearest Lotty," Edie put her hand hurriedly up to her sister's flushed cheek, "surely you have had no trouble. You never knew mamma; and Douglas——"

"And Douglas," Lottie said meaningly.

Edie snatched her hand away, and a dull flush rose into her thin face.

"Lotty, *Lotty*!" she said with a gasp. "Do you mean——"

"I thought you knew," Lotty said, with a little laugh of self-contempt. "Did I hide it so well that you never guessed? *Nell* knew. She laughed at me for it once; *now* do you wonder that I hate her, though she *is* my sister?"

"Poor child!" Edie said, with a quick sob. "Oh, my poor little Lotty! You must try to—to forget it, dear, as Nell has done."

"Like Nell?" Lotty said bitterly. "I am not one of the forgetting kind—and neither are you, Edie."

"Lotty!"

"Oh! did you think *I* was blind, too?" Lotty cried, holding her sister tightly in her strong young arms. "I saw it all along, Edie. Edie!"—in quick alarm—"you're not going to faint, are you? You look so strange. Edie, Edie, speak to me."

"I am—very well," Edie said, with her hand to her heart again. "Lotty, dear, let me go—I am not ill——"

"Poor Douglas!" Lotty said, hoping to bring the merciful tears to Edie's dry eyes. "How fond he was of us, wasn't he? And how devoted to Nell! I wonder, if they had married, how long it would have been before he saw through her? I wish we had known more about that Egyptian Expedition, dear."

"I knew—he died," Edie said hoarsely. "That was enough for me."

"Edie, dear, why won't you let yourself cry? It would do you good."

"You are—not crying, Lotty."

"No." Lotty's face hardened. "I'm not one of the crying sort: perhaps I don't feel enough to cry. Edie, that is one o'clock striking; and just think how ghastly we shall look to-morrow. We must go to bed at once. Come, dear, hurry!"

"I am coming."

"Is it a fine night? I hope Nell will have good weather to-morrow. 'Happy is the bride that the sun shines on.'"

If so, Nell Varney was sure of a happy married life indeed, for when she passed up the church on her cousin's arm, on her way to the altar, where her father and her bridegroom were waiting for her, the sun shone out as brightly as if it were high midsummer instead of March. The taller of the two bridesmaids started and changed colour as she glanced at the empty rectory pew; and then, setting her red lips closely together, she fixed her eyes on her father's gentle old face, and listened to Nell taking her vows, radiant in her white satin and orange-blossoms.

"I, Helen Angela, take thee, William, to my wedded husband: to have and to hold from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer; in sickness and in health—to love, cherish, and to obey till death us do part—according to God's holy ordinance. And thereto I plight thee my troth." While Colonel Vyner was busy with the ring, the other bridesmaid turned sharply towards the rectory pew, and several of the guests, following the direction of her gaze, saw for an instant a fair head and a pair of broad shoulders above the rectory pew. Then there was the little bustle of kneeling, and the Rector's clear voice spoke the blessing over the bowed heads of bride and groom, and nobody noticed that the two sister bridesmaids in grey and silver were as pale as death, and visibly trembling. On her way down the church Nell Vyner stopped short for an instant, and her delicate face grew suddenly sharpened and white as she too glanced at the rectory pew. The next moment she swept on her way, smiling and rosy once more; yet her momentary pause had sent a thrill of some unknown terror through the church; and all eyes were averted from the rectory pew, lest they should again see in it that bowed fair head, and that set bronzed face that was so terribly like Nell's dead lover, Douglas Connah. As she changed her shining gown of grey silk and silver broideries for a simpler dress, Lotty spoke of it to her sister, not looking at her the while.

"Edie, did you hear what nurse was saying to-day? That — that she had seen *him* in our pew: that Nell saw him too."

"Yes," Edie said quietly. "Perhaps she did. *I* did."

"Edie, Edie, so did I," Lotty panted. "Will you ever dare to sit in the pew again?"

"Yes," Edie said, with a touch of passion in her calm voice. "I—I think I shall go there now for a little while. Perhaps I shall see him again."

"Edie!" Lotty said quickly, and her sister's white cheeks flushed suddenly.

"I'm sorry, dear—I beg your pardon. There's time enough," with a wild, sad smile. "God knows, I can wait!" Lotty laid her brown head down on her sister's bosom, and burst into passionate tears.

This was only the beginning of the end; for again and again, and yet again, Douglas Connah's face was seen in the rectory pew, until at last the frightened worshippers forsook that side of the church altogether; but Edie and Lotty Varney were faithful to the haunted pew, and sat there Sunday after Sunday, and saint's day after saint's day, even when the Rector had gone to join Alice his wife. Then Lotty sat in the pew alone, for Edie was confined to her room, a helpless invalid. And for some ten years more Lotty sat alone in the haunted pew, while her youth and beauty forsook her slowly, leaving her grey and sad and bitter. And then gentle Edie went to look for Nell's forgotten lover, in the land where are "the lost Aprils and the lost Mays," and thereafter Lotty's face was seen less often in the rectory pew. When she died the ghost of Douglas Connah was seen no more. Nell, sobbing gently through the funeral service over her sister, saw nothing in the church, nothing in the open air beside the grave. But Lotty's eyes had been clearer even when she was very near death, for at the last of all she had turned from Mrs. Vyner to the empty chair at the other side of the bed, and her face had lighted up with all the old youth and beauty.

With that wonderful look on her face she went to find Edie and Douglas Connah, and the ghost never came again to the rectory pew.

OUR LADY OF FERRARA.

By GRANT ALLEN.

THE three principal Ferrarese Madonnas in the National Gallery form a peculiarly interesting and valuable series, as illustrating the development of a single group or subject, in a single school, through three successive stages of artistic progress. As a rule, indeed, the rapid evolution of Italian art can only adequately be traced on Italian soil, where many consecutive treatments of the self-same theme may be observed and compared in close proximity to one another. Fortune, however, has been kind to us with Our Lady of Ferrara: we possess in our own collection in Trafalgar Square no less than three of the finest presentments of the local Madonna of that decayed capital, each answering to an important and decisive moment in the growth and development of Ferrarese art.

Our earliest specimen of the three is that strange and at first sight somewhat repellent picture by Cosimo Tura, the vigorous father of Ferrarese painting, whose crude and startling discords in red and green have no doubt astonished many an innocent visitor to the National Gallery. The curiously lurid effect of Cosimo's vivid colour, always conspicuous for its extraordinary abundance of bright grass-greens, cannot, of course, be suggested by a black and white reproduction; but the quaint stiffness of his figures, the angularity of his drawing, the hard folds of his drapery, and the exaggerated, almost Chinese, obliquity of his eye-orbits are all well represented in the characteristic Madonna here set before us. I need hardly say that those who would study the picture aright must go to the original for its bold and eccentric colour; our little Illustration only serves to recall the general effect of the work to those who have already made acquaintance at first hand with Cosimo's idiosyncrasy.

I would only call attention in passing here to three or four points in this interesting rather than beautiful picture. Notice first the peculiarly Mongolian and inexpressive face of the Madonna herself, with her almond eyes, and her broad round countenance—peculiarities observable in more than one of the angels who surround the throne, and especially in the two who are seated on the intermediate grade of steps, playing the guitar or mandoline. These features, I believe, are characteristically ancient Etruscan, and they are common in the earlier works of the Ferrarese school, and even in Cossa. They merge with Lorenzo Costa into the Bolognese ideal. Observe, also, the quaintly contorted limbs of the Divine Child, twisted in that constrained way which always marks the first effort of nascent art towards variety of attitude and emotional expression. In trying to be alive, art at this stage habitually becomes vehement and unnatural. And do not forget to glance at some characteristic accessories: the highly decorated throne, the sunk panels of the arched ceiling, the Hebrew inscription on the niche at the back, the fruit and flowers so common in such works, but possessing here a certain unspeakable Ferrarese touch of difference. This ornate character of decoration was long retained by Ferrarese art; and the architectural details in particular may be profitably compared with those many minor pictures in the same room of the Gallery.

The picture as a whole thus forms a good example of the elaborate treatment of the Madonna and Child which prevailed in the Bolognese and Ferrarese schools. The sharp folds of the drapery, on the other hand, betray at once the personal style of Cosimo Tura, who can always be recognised both by this peculiarity and by his singular and startling scheme of colouring. But the two little angels at the foot of the throne, engaged in playing the "regal" or portable organ, are sweeter than is usual with the creations of so rough and harsh a master. The one to the spectator's left touches the keys of the instrument; her companion to the right is represented with quaint naïveté as blowing the bellows. The panel originally constituted the central portion of an altarpiece, the lunette of

which consisted of Cosimo's well-known "Pietà," now hung in the Louvre. Its decorative detail is well worthy of close study. I will call attention now to one point more only—the winged lion and bull, the eagle and angel who surmount the throne, symbols, as I need hardly say, of the four Evangelists.

The second enthroned Madonna of the Ferrarese school to which I would direct your notice in the present paper is the far more beautiful picture by a little-known painter who rejoices in the somewhat awkwardly redundant name of Ercole di Giulio Cesare Grandi. I will not trouble you here with any particulars of the controversy which has raged, and still rages, round this problematical master's shadowy personality; you will find as much as you care to know about the subject in the Official Catalogue and in Kugler's history. I am more concerned at present with the picture itself, which is one of the noblest and most satisfying works in our national collection. Its glow of colour immediately attracts the eye from a distance; its exquisite composition and its beautiful painting impress one more and more the longer one looks at it.

MADONNA ENTHRONED.—BY COSIMO TURA.
In the National Gallery.

The Madonna and Child sit enthroned in the centre under an arch with a panelled ceiling, which at once recalls Cosimo Tura's treatment. Minute comparison of these two similar arches and the capitals of their pilasters well repay the time spent upon them. But the Madonna's face and figure show an enormous advance in art during the short space of time that separates the painter from his predecessor Cosimo; while the general arrangement of the figures may be profitably compared with the composition in Raphael's famous Blenheim Madonna. The two represent as nearly as possible corresponding moments in the evolution of style, the one in the Umbrian, the other in the Ferrarese school. Our Lady's face has in it a passing touch of Francia with a more marked reminiscence of Costa's style; the Infant on her knees stands erect and benignant, admirably poised, and entirely naked; He holds out His right hand in the familiar attitude of priestly benediction. Observe in both these pictures the almost ungainly height of Our Lady's throne, characteristic of Venetian and Ferrarese devotion. On the Madonna's right (and the spectator's left) stands the youthful figure of St. William, in full knightly armour. This forms the most attractive and beautiful feature in the entire composition. Now, St. William, or San Guglielmo, is a great

local saint at Ferrara, whom we shall meet once more in the neighbouring altarpiece by the sugary-sweet Garofalo. A church and convent dedicated to him long existed in the town; his figure therefore recurs frequently in Ferrarese pictures. Balancing him on the other side of the composition stands St. John the Baptist, holding his usual reed cross and the Book of Prophets. He should be specially compared with Raphael's St. John Baptist, in the Blenheim Madonna. The work as a whole thus represents, of course, the common subject of the Madonna enthroned, attended by the particular saints of the donor or church—a kind of group which forms the most frequent theme of art for Italian altarpieces. This particular specimen is believed to have come from the Church of the Concezione at Ferrara; but it is worthy of remark that both the saints who appear in it had churches in the town, that of San Guglielmo being now secularised, while that of San Giovanni Battista still exists in the sleepy little piazza which opens into the Corso di Porta Mare.

Of the rich decorative work lavished on every part of the picture I will not say much. The student should observe it for himself on the original panel. I will content myself with indicating what seems to be its historical meaning. The subject on the top, by the left side, I cannot confidently identify; I take it, however, to be "The Judgment of Solomon"; the subject on the right is, quite undeniably, "The Sacrifice of Isaac." The medallions in the spandrels of the arch represent the Annunciation, with the angel Gabriel, as usual, to the left and the Madonna at her conventional Prie-Dieu to the right. The base of the throne has Adam and Eve in relief in ivory with the Tree of Knowledge, flanked on either side by the turbaned head of a Jewish prophet. Beneath, on the plinth, are subjects alternately in grisaille and colour, representing (from right to left) the Nativity, the Presentation in the Temple, the Massacre of the Innocents, the Flight into Egypt, and Christ Disputing with the Doctors in the Temple. As a whole this splendid work forms a worthy monument of the prevailing spirit of the Middle Renaissance; while the admirable drawing and perfect balance of the infant Christ might almost entitle it to rank with the finest work of Raphael. Nor would the pose of San Guglielmo do discredit to Giorgione, whose own exquisite St. George in the altarpiece at Castelfranco it distinctly recalls to us.

The third of our Ferrarese pictures begins, it must be allowed, to herald the decline: it has no longer the simple force and charming sense of architectural symmetry which distinguish the Ercole di Giulio Grandi. It is an altarpiece by Garofalo, which originally occupied the place of honour above the high altar of the church of San Guglielmo in the grass-grown city. The centre of the picture is occupied, as usual, by the Madonna and Child—a Madonna in whom the somewhat insipid sweetness of the later Renaissance takes the place of the dignity, solemnity, and beauty of the greatest age. The saints at the side exhibit the true nature of the work at once as essentially a Franciscan altarpiece, intended for the decoration of a Franciscan conventual establishment. On the Madonna's right stand two somewhat realistic figures in coarse brown robes, whom we recognise at a glance as Franciscan friars, only too closely studied from life, and entirely wanting in ideality or inner saintliness of character. If one dare hint such a word, indeed, they look even a trifle greasy and grubby. An earlier age would have made their attributes clear to us; but Garofalo, learned in all the somewhat affected art of the Raphaelesque painters, takes care to reduce the symbols of the saints to the most inconspicuous relics. Close attention, however, will show that the friar on the right hand nearest to the throne bears marks of the stigmata on his hands and feet, which show him to be St. Francis of Assisi himself, the founder of our order; while the neighbouring friar with a lily in his hand, a little more in the background, is equally known for St. Antony of Padua, second in sanctity among canonised Franciscans. On the other side of the throne we get St. William himself, the patron saint of church and convent, in his armour as before—a graceful and dainty figure, but not to compare in strength and majesty with Ercole's splendid warrior. Behind him stands a nun in Franciscan robes, whom we know to be Santa Chiara, the companion of St. Francis and foundress of the Poor Clares, the female branch of the Franciscan society. All the characters in the picture are thus grouped together as the chief objects of devotion on the part of this particular Ferrarese convent.

It is impossible to look at this handsome work without recognising at once the immense advance in artistic technique which it displays, and the obvious traces of the influence of Raphael. But it is impossible also not to see that what was gained

MADONNA ENTHRONED, WITH ST. WILLIAM AND ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST.
In the Nat. nal Gallery.

in art and knowledge was more than lost in power, freshness, and spirit. The work as a whole is tame and uninteresting; even the skill with which Garofalo has used the traditional greens of the Ferrarese school of colourists to relieve the prevailing browns of the Franciscan robes does not suffice to raise his work into the same high rank as Ercole's masterpiece. We cannot look at it without realising at a glance the beginnings of that sad and rapid decline which resulted so soon in the learned inanities and ineptitudes of the Carracci.

SPRING THOUGHTS FROM ENGLAND.

By MARGARET L. WOODS.

O that I were lying under the olives,
Lying alone among the anemones!
Shell-coloured blossoms they bloom there and scarlet,
Far under stretches of silver woodland,
Flame in the delicate shade of the olives.

O that I were lying under the olives!
Grey grows the thyme on the shadowless headland,
The long low headland, where white in the sunshine
The rocks run seaward. It seems suspended
Lone in an infinite gulf of azure.

There, were I lying under the olives,
Might I behold come following seaward,
Clear brown shapes in a world of sunshine,
A russet shepherd, his sheep too, russet.
Watch them wander the long grey headland
Out to the edge of the burning azure.

O that I were lying under the olives!
So should I see the far-off cities
Glittering low by the purple water,
Gleaming high on the purple mountain;
See where the road goes winding southward.
It passes the valleys of almond blossom,
Curves round the crag o'er the steep hanging orchards,
Where almond and peach are aflush mid the olives—
Hardly the amethyst sea shines through them—
Over it cypress on solemn cypress
Lead to the lonely pilgrimage places.

O that I were dreaming under the olives!
Hearing alone on the sun-steeped headland
A crystalline wave, almost inaudible,
Steal round the shore; and thin, far off,
The shepherd's music. So did it sound
In fields Sicilian; Theocritus heard it,
Moschus and Bion piped it at noontide.

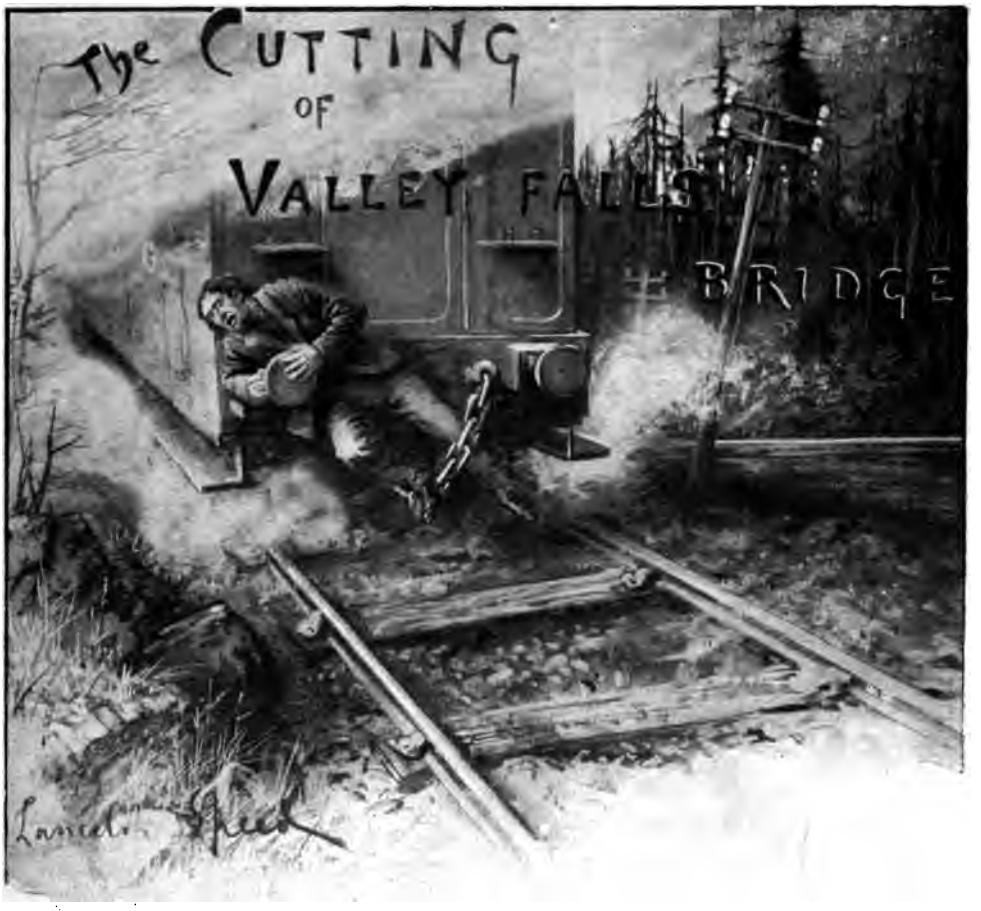
O that I were listening under the olives!
So should I hear behind in the woodland
The peasants talking. Either a woman,
A wrinkled grandamé, stands in the sunshine,
Stirs the brown soil in an acre of violets—
Large odorous violets—and answers slowly
A child's swift babble; or else at noon
The labourers come. They rest in the shadow,
Eating their dinner of herbs, and are merry.

Soft speech Provençal under the olives!
Like a queen's raiment from days long perished,
Breathing aromas of old unremembered
Perfumes and shining in dust-covered places
With sudden hints of forgotten splendour:
So on the lips of the peasant his language,
His only now, the tongue of the peasant.

Would I were listening under the olives!
So should I see in an airy pageant
A proud chivalrous pomp sweep by me,
Hear in high courts the joyous ladies
Devising of Love in a world of lovers;
Hear the song of the Lion-hearted—
A deep-voiced song—and oh! perchance,
Ghostly and strange and sweet to madness,
Rudel sing the Lady of Tripoli.

A. THOUGHT. BY. ROBERT. LOUIS STEVENSON.

"It is very nice to think
The world is full of meat
And drink, With little
Children saying Grace
In every Christian
Kind of place"



By J. HOLT SCHOOLING.

THE man had been muddling about for two hours or more trying to fix a patent lock on the door of a bookcase in my study. He wouldn't let me show him how to do it, and as he had no more adaptability than the average British workman, he made a hash of a very simple matter. At last I grew weary of the man's fumbling, and told him to go back to the workshops and ask Mr. Lucas to send someone who understood putting on locks. With a muttered growl at me and the lock he bundled his tools in his bag and went. Another man came and soon fixed the lock. He was a better man altogether, and I began chatting to him, and found he was a mechanic who had served for South against North in the Civil War of thirty years ago — a Yorkshireman who was employed on the railway at New Orleans when the war broke out, and who, later on, took part in it. He was an oldish, tough-looking, grey-lean fellow, and I noticed that the loss of two fingers from his left hand did not prevent the skilful use of his tools. I made some casual remark to this effect, and the man said, as he held out the hand for my inspection: "It's a clean-cut job, Mister, too. No saw took 'em off—I lost 'em when we stole the train

at Prantock. The engine jerked a bit, and my hand got in the way." I asked for particulars, and, as it was just near his dinner-hour, I suggested that he should stop here and have some dinner and tell me about the adventure. "Never mind that," I said, as the man glanced at his rather soiled clothes and then at my new carpet, "sit down here and smoke if you like while I see about some dinner." I rang the bell and told the servant to bring up something—which was soon brought—and as we ate and drank and afterwards smoked together Mayhew told me his tale.

"They soon got me to work for them down South, for engineers were scarce, and the pay was good. I went through a mixed lot of stuff: fighting one week and driving a locomotive the next, or, maybe, combining the two jobs. I was shifted about a good deal, and after a hot bit at Adam's Peak I was made a sergeant, though it was little I knew about fighting, 'cept the elementary principle of trying to give more than you take. However, what with driving and fighting I got along well enough, and we had a pretty free time of it so long as we did our work all right.

"The Colonel of my regiment was a young planter living just out of New Orleans. He was a dashing, reckless chap, with more pluck than prudence. We all liked him, and I suppose you wouldn't have looked for much prudence among the '1st New Orleans,' as we were called. I was one of the 'slowest' of the lot, but then, somehow, my trade makes a man stop and think a goodish bit as he works at it.

"About six months after we began fighting the North we were up at a little place called Bluefield, and the frontier wing of our side had just had a bad beating from General Fairman with about thirty thousand mixed Northerners, who were lying thick at Nashville, where the new rail starts down South. They were about a hundred miles from us, and we learnt that they were going to pour down South as far as they could get by the rail as soon as General Fairman was reinforced by another lot who could occupy Nashville in his place. Of course, this wouldn't be good for us, and Esden, our Colonel, hit on a plan to stop them coming along so fast.

"Colonel Esden sent for me, and I said I'd do what he wanted. His plan was to go with thirty of us to Nashville—in civilian dress, of course—and we were all to get there in separate parties of twos and threes, pass ourselves off as Northerners who wanted to travel south from Nashville, along the fifty miles or so of line that was still open for passenger traffic as far as the Northerners held the line. We were all to meet at Nashville on the Saturday—this was on Monday that I'm telling you about—take our tickets to Prantock, ten miles south of Nashville, and then while the train stopped at Prantock we were to capture the engine, tender, and front van, and race along south, breaking the track in certain places after we had passed, cutting the wires, and generally destroying the road as a line of communication. I was to drive the engine, and the Colonel hoped by this plan to delay the approach of the Northerners long enough for our reinforcements to get up and stop them raiding us farther south.

"The other engineer was a mate of mine, who had gone out with me from Palmer's yard over here. He was a Londoner—Phil Hickens—and a smart man. His job was to uncouple the engine, tender, and front van from the rest of the train at Prantock, where, as I tell you, we were to try to run off. The Colonel was to be with us to boss the job, and to do the bounce that would be wanted to get past the other Northern stations before we reached our own part of the line further South. The other men were to be ready to do the shooting, pull up the rails, cut the tressel bridges and wires, and make themselves generally useful.

"It was a bold plan, but Colonel Esden picked his thirty men by keeping the crowd of us back, and just naming those he thought likely.

"We started that day—Monday—and by next Saturday we met at Nashville—all but four of us, who didn't turn up. I heard after they'd bungled the job, and been shot as spies. Our band went separately to the dépôt at Nashville on Saturday midday, and took tickets to Prantock.

"There were a lot of civilians going down, and a detachment of Fairman's men as well. Of course we got in anywhere about the train, but the Colonel and me and Hickens were in front. We steamed out of the dépôt at 12.30, and were due at Prantock at one o'clock. It was slow going, and the train was loaded. Some of Fairman's lot were in our car, and as we didn't want to get let in for talking, the Colonel pulls out a pocket chess-board, and he and me made a pretence at playing a game, and Hickens looked on.

"A DROP OF NIGH ON A THOUSAND FEET."

"It's all very well to fight when your blood's up, but since you ask me how I felt, Mister, why, I don't mind saying now that I felt liverish, and as to Hickens, he could hardly keep still. The Colonel was as excited, but he kept himself well in hand, bar the twitching of his nostrils.

"We began to slow up for Prantock, but we kept on at the chess-board till we got right in the dépôt, where there was a

stoppage for five minutes. We all knew this, and had laid our plans to fit.

"'Leave the board, Jim,' says the Colonel to me pretty loud as a group of the Northerners passed us to leave the car, 'we'll finish when we come back.' And out we got, while Phil Hickens slips off on the other side, just waiting for the engineer to get down before he goes to work to uncouple the engine-tender and big front van.

"The Northerners held the line for forty miles further South, and had no idea any of us were near them. Most all of them got off, and so did the engineer and his sub. Our men quietly strolled along to near the head of the train, and the Colonel and me were just watching for Hickens to finish his job with the couplings. The van door was open, for some mails had been taken out, and this helped us a bit.

"The Colonel had the cigar in his mouth, and the match ready to strike—that was the signal for the rush. Phil gives a low whistle, and makes for the off side of the engine, the Colonel strikes his match, and with me steps up on the engine, while the others just made a rush for the open van. It was a close shave. The engineer was coming back when I got up, and, as I pulled the lever, his pistol gave the alarm and the bullet smacked on the side-plate, his second caught Hickens's wrist as he was climbing up, and would have dropped him if the Colonel hadn't lugged him in.

"Before we could get any pace on there was a splatter of pistol-bullets all round us—the rifles were inside the cars left behind. I was too busy to look anywhere but in front of me, but I heard the Colonel curse as the bested Northerners shot a couple of our men who had failed to get into the van. Another of our party just managed to hang on by the end buffer of the van, but was dropped before we could get him out of their fire.

"Hickens's wrist was tied up, and then he and the Colonel set to work stoking. While we were waiting at Prantock I had noticed something we hadn't bargained for, the smoke stack of a locomotive in a little side shed. I waited till we were well on speed, and then I asked Colonel Esden if he had seen it. 'Yes; we're in for a chase; but crack on, and we shall have time to break the road before they can start.'

"I got up the pace to about forty-five, and soon we approached a sharp curve on the line. 'Pull up, my lad,' says the Colonel; 'here's our first job.' We slowed down, and before we had stopped the others were out of the van and at work on the rails. You see, Mister, they weren't heavy laid like the roads here, and in five minutes we had a nasty opening in the rails; we used the jointed crowbars we had brought with us.

"'All aboard!" shouts the Colonel, and off we went on a long stretch of straight road, which would take us up to a little dépôt, called Beeton; and although one of us had been told off to cut the wire outside the telegraph office at Prantock, we did not know if he had succeeded, for, of course, he had to be left behind and take his chance of escape. We cut the lines by the curve where we stopped; but they might have got a message through to Beeton. Anyway, we meant to run through if we could, and the place was only a box; but we had to look out for a break in the road, such as we had left behind for the enemy. So we couldn't put on much pace till we had passed Beeton, and ran along at about twenty-mile speed, which we slowed as we got near the dépôt.

"To our relief there were no breaks in the line, and no opposition at Beeton, so we concluded the wire had been cut at Prantock, and heartily wished poor Williamson the luck to escape—he was the man left at Prantock to cut the wire, and, yes, he did escape—I suppose during the commotion when we rushed the train.

"As we were leaving Beeton dépôt and were still on the long stretch of straight road, the Colonel, who was watching the back-line with his glass, exclaimed, "Here they come! Now, Jim, we've got our work cut out!" He gave me the glass, and sure enough I could see a far-distant speck of mist right away at the back of us, which we knew must be a party of Fairman's men on our track. We put on pace now, and as we rushed ahead the Colonel puzzled whether to go back and fight or to push on in the hope of cutting the bridge at Valley Falls. He settled to go on, as the breaking of the line was the sole object of our plan, and if they had brought on all the detachment we saw at Nashville we shouldn't have had a fair chance in a fight. Besides, our engine would probably have been damaged, even if we came off best in the fight, and we should have been landed there with no chance of getting south before another lot came along.

"But we lost sight of them, for, of course, they had to stop before they could

get over the break we had made—we reckoned it meant at least ten minutes gained to us. We had to pass a biggish place—Buttercreek—before we got the run on to Valley Falls, where we hoped to cut the bridge, and although from inquiries we had made we did not know of anything coming up on the Saturday to Nashville—it was only a single-line track—we were nervous about some obstruction at Buttercreek, because they would naturally be suspicious at seeing us instead of the whole train they expected from Nashville, especially as our faces would be strange to them. I must tell you that we knew it would be very awkward to run through Buttercreek if they suspected us there; the points were kept laid off on to a siding as a rule—a bit of caution ordered by one of the Northern men in charge. However, so far, all had gone well—bar the chase of us—and we meant to rely on the Colonel's bounce, and, if that failed, we should fight our way through Buttercreek dépôt.

"When we were nearing Buttercreek the Colonel ordered all the men but me and Hickens inside the van: they were to lie there hid with the doors fastened inside, but ready to fight if need be—they had revolvers and knives; rifles we couldn't bring with us. The van had no windows—only shutters with slits on the slant upwards—so that no one could see inside, and the Colonel meant to bounce the Buttercreek people that he was conveying a special freight from General Fairman to Pleasant Town, some way the other side of Valley Falls, and where was the last important Northern dépôt on the track.

"As ill luck would have it, we saw as we got into sight of the dépôt that there was a train just pulling up there—it was facing us on the same line—a single line I told you it was—and must have come along unexpectedly. This was a facer, and instinctively the Colonel and Phil and me felt to see that our pistols were handy, for we knew it would take all the Colonel knew to get them to shunt that train to let us pass, and then the delay must let our pursuers catch up on us. I forgot to tell you we had made a second stop and broken the line again and cut the wires.

"Well, we steamed in to the dépôt, and the Colonel was off the engine like a shot, pushing along for the dépôt-keeper and swearing—for the benefit of the people standing about—at the 'cursed South train blocking the way of General Fairman's express.' You bet-or-b'lieve me, Mister, the Colonel was right on his mettle, what with that blamed train standing in our way and with the Prantock lot coming up behind, and who might get in sight any minute if they'd been quick with patching the broken line. As for me and Phil Hickens, we just froze to that engine, and tried to believe we were deaf and dumb when people began asking us about the Nashville train; but we put 'em off as best we could, and the Colonel was making such an all-fired fuss with the dépôt-keeper that most of the attention went his way.

"I think they must have been doubtful about us, but Colonel Esden kept his head although he pretended to lose his temper. We couldn't hear all he said, but after about ten minutes' rowing, which seemed an hour to me, while Phil danced as if the engine-plate was red-hot, that Northward train began to back into the siding. It went so slow my fingers itched to turn on steam and push it along, and to make things worse Phil whispered to me that he could feel a slight vibration coming up from the rails—it was the other lot catching us up.

"The Colonel kept up his bullyragging to the last moment, turning round on them even as he climbed up, when at last the road was clear. But the vibration was turning into a rumble that could be heard, and, on the moment, the dépôt-keeper yelled to the engineer on the train now in the siding to stop us. He started to block the road, but I had the way on him by twenty seconds, and before he could get out on the main track we had just scraped past his engine. Our men flung open their doors and returned the shots that came after us, and I got up all the pace I could, for it now meant a race for life to the bridge at Valley Falls. Mister! I tell you that was life—L I F E. I felt the blood fairly spurting in me.

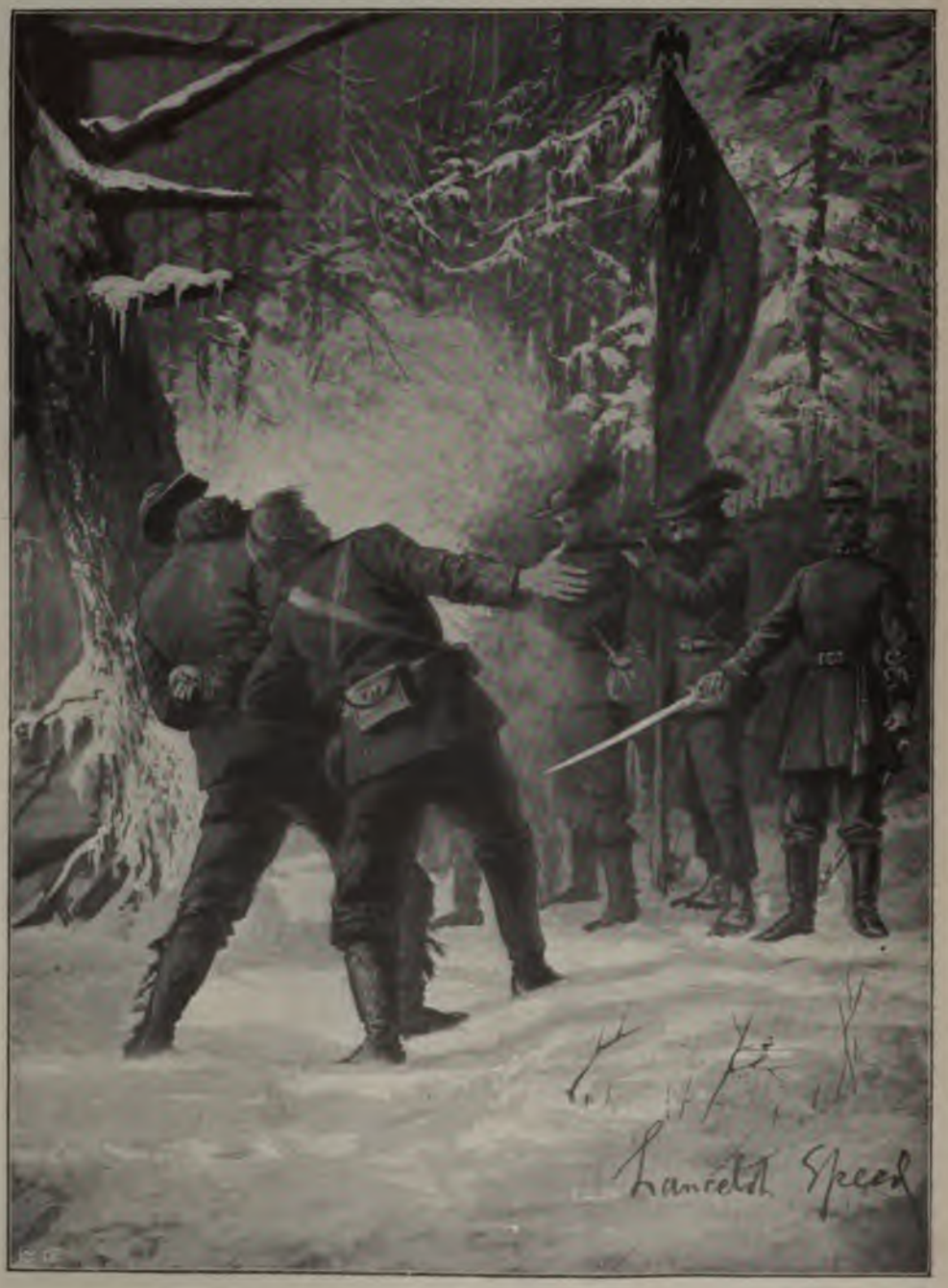
[It was difficult for one to believe that this fiery-eyed engineer, as he strode about the room and told me this, was the same patient-fingered man who an hour ago had fixed the lock for me.]

"The Colonel gave orders to the men in the van to break up all the upper woodwork of it, as we were getting short of fuel and the pace was big—fifty at least. It was just here I lost these fingers: stooping down for a big splinter of wood one of them had thrown over, I let my hand get between the edges where the engine floor touched the tender, and as we were swaying a bit the jolt took 'em off clean, but I hardly noticed it then, except for the bloody wood.

"As soon as the Buttercreek people

saw the lot after us—an engine and two vans so far as we could make out—the other train backed again so as to let the Prantock men run past—they weren't up there yet, but we saw they soon would be.

"Colonel Esden soon made up his mind. It was clear we couldn't stop this side of Valley Falls, and perhaps not the other side, so he calls out as loud as he could—for we were shrieking along,



"THOSE THAT WERE CAUGHT WERE SHOT AS SPIES."

and there was all the smashing of the van behind—'Men! The ten whose names I call will be ready to quit this side of Valley Falls Bridge—and the next ten I call will drop off the other side. You will attack the supports of the bridge on both sides the moment we have passed it. Then disperse, and good luck to you!'

"As he gave this order, which meant pretty certain death for the twenty, Colonel Esden raised his cap gravely to his men, and they yelled out, 'Ready, Colonel,' and just stopped smashing the van while the Colonel shouted the names of twenty of them.

"The enemy had passed Buttercreek, but were not gaining, we thought. It was no use to drop a man to cut the wires, for, of course, Buttercreek had sent a message to Pleasant Town—the place I told you was some way the other side of Valley Falls—and they would likely send to meet us: so things were getting hot for us all along.

"We got sight of Valley Falls Bridge—one of those light tressle bridges, easy enough to upset with proper tools, but a tough job for only crowbars and knives. The two lots of ten men kept on breaking up the van till we neared within a mile, and I slowed down the pace to give them a chance to quit. They tumbled off like firemen from a fire-engine I once saw turn over as she went round a street corner too sharp, and with a cheer on both sides we started across the bridge, and they went to work. Two minutes more, and we dropped the other ten with a clear hearing of the thundering engine coming up the line at the back of us.

"Our plan now was to push on as far as the second bridge, which lay between us and Pleasant Town, cut it, and then disperse and try to get to Bluefield, where we had started from on the Monday. There were only three of us left—the Colonel, me, and Phil Hickens—and we travelled light; but they weren't far behind us. The line ran nearly straight between the two bridges—Valley Falls and Dock Island—the one we were running for, and soon the Colonel could see with his glass the Prantock engine slow up a bit at the far side of Valley Falls, and then came the hard *rap rap* of revolvers and the sharp crack of their rifles. But they didn't stop long—a minute, perhaps—enough to tell them the bridge was safe their side, and they dashed on over it, leaving some of their number to finish off our ten, who worked, the Colonel told us, right up to the moment when the engine reached them, and then only half of them stood up to fight while the others went on at breaking the supports from the edge.

"Then we saw them on the bridge and our men working like devils this side of it. They on the engine began shooting before they were halfway over; but not a man of our ten so much as looked up; they just cut and heaved. And they were still cutting and heaving as it seemed to us when we saw the engine stack dip not twenty yards from the edge, and then go lower while the two vans tilted up on her, and down they went—a drop of nigh on a thousand feet. I felt then, Mister, that they might have dropped right through to hell for what I cared.

"The run was quite short between the two bridges, and we were soon working at the Dock Island bridge, and we meant to disperse after the job. Nine of the ten who had cut Valley Falls—one was shot from the engine—rejoined us while we were at work: there wasn't time then to say or do anything but hack and break the bridge, for we saw another engine coming up from Pleasant Town—sent to meet us by message from Buttercreek. But we broke the connection in time, and they stopped the other side, and we were left on the top of the hill—Niggerhead Range—with only one more job before us—to get to Bluefield, which lay ten miles the other side of Pleasant Town.

"Did we get there? Some of us did, and some didn't. I did, and those that were caught were shot as spies—the Colonel and Phil Hickens were caught. But shot or not shot, the Colonel did the job he went for, and by cutting the bridge at Valley Falls stopped the run south of those blasted——"

As Mayhew was speaking I was startled by hearing the housemaid's voice. "Please, Sir, I've been knocking at the door, and Mr. Lucas has sent to know if the man has done his work here, as he wants him for another job."

Photo by Lafayette, Dublin.

PUSSY'S SECRET.

THE SPARROW IN THE ZOO.

By PHIL ROBINSON.

IT is not easy to astonish a sparrow. You can scare them—"often scared as oft return, a pert, voracious kind"—and make them fly away; but that is only because the sparrow has the bump of self-preservation very prominently developed, and takes a hint as to personal danger with extraordinary promptitude. But though it may remove its small body out of harm's way for the time being it is not disconcerted. You can see that by the way in which it immediately goes on with its toilet. Its nerves have not been shaken—that is evident from its obvious self-possession, and the way it scratches its head and makes a note of the fly which went by. It would not commence at once a frivolous altercation with another of its kind if it had been disconcerted. And really, it is not to be wondered at that the sparrow should be beyond the reach of astonishment. Think of what it sees, and sees quite unconcernedly, in the streets of London. Put a tiger into Fleet Street, or a bear at the Bank, and the poor beasts would go crazy with terror. A single omnibus would stampede a troop of lions. Yet a sparrow surveys the approaching fire-engine undismayed, and it sits with its back to the street when a runaway van comes thundering death down Ludgate Hill. The small bird's life is, in fact, so made up of surprises that it regards the astounding as commonplace. So a fly, sitting down in a train, thinks nothing of finding itself in the next county when it gets up. Its whole existence is volcanic and seismic. It cannot settle on a hand without the hand moving. What would a dog think if, on going into a ten-acre field, the field suddenly turned over? But the fly is not put out of countenance by such "phenomena." It comes back to the hand again. It is the same with the sparrow. It thinks no more of another wonder than the Seven Champions did of an extra dragon in the day's work.

All the same, I have seen a sparrow totally confounded and all to pieces. It was, I confess, only a young one, with just the promise of a tail—nothing more; and some odds and ends of fluff still clinging between the red feathers. I was looking at the rhinoceros, which was lying down close to the railings, and a very sleepy rhinoceros it was. Except for slight twitches of the tail and an occasional fidget of the ears, it was quite motionless. And the young sparrow hopping about in the enclosure, coming to the beast, hopped on to it, looking in the chinks of its skin for chance grains or insects. And it hopped all along its back on to its head (the rhinoceros winked), and along its head on to the little horn, and from the little horn on to the big one (and it blinked), and then off the horn on to its nose. And then the rhinoceros snorted. The sparrow was a sight to see. Exploded is no word for it. And it sate all in a little heap on the corner of the house, and chirped the mournfullest chirps. "I

AND THEN THE RHINOCEROS SNORTED.

hadn't the smallest notion the thing was alive," it said. "Oh dear! oh dear!" and it wouldn't be pacified for a long time. Its astonishment had been severe and had got "into the system." I remembered the story of the boy who sat on the whale's blow-hole. Behemoth had got stranded on the Shetland coast. While the population were admiring it, an urchin climbed on to the head of the distressful monster, and exultantly seated his graceless person on its forehead. He had but a short time to enjoy his triumph, and the next instant the whale, filling itself with air, blew such a blast through its blow-hole that the boy was blown up into the air and out to sea. So said the veracious chronicler of the day--and I hope it was true, for little boys should not, under any circumstances, sit on the blow-holes of whales. Nor young sparrows on the nostrils of a rhinoceros.

"But that was nothing," said the sparrow in answer to my condolence, "to what happened to my mother once, the first day she came here. She was feeding in an enclosure where there was a pond, and in the middle of the pond was a great ball of white feathers on the top of a long pink stick. She was quite young, and thought the feathers would be nice and warm to go to sleep in. So she flew up to it and got inside the feathers. And before she knew where she was, the ball opened out and two great wings, scarlet and black, began to flap, and a great long neck with a crooked beak at the end of it came out from under the wings—it was a flamingo! But the fright my mother got then she never got over, and for ever so long she had a white feather in her tail. It was the fright that turned it white, she said."

"It's a dreadful place, the Zoo," broke in another sparrow who had come up, "a dreadful place till you get to know it—and then you don't care so much."

"Why! what do you mean—a dreadful place? Boys can't throw stones at you here, and there are no cats."

"No cats! It's worse than cats. What I mean is this. We get so accustomed to animals in their cages when we're inside that we forget when we are outside that cats will catch us. When you've been all the morning among a lot of things all going out and doing you no harm, you are very liable when you see a cat coming along to take no notice of it till it's too late. That's what happened to my father. Besides, you never can tell what's inside a cage and what isn't. You get on to some stand, and all of a sudden out comes a paw and makes a grab at you. Or you're hopping about on the floor, and down comes an arm out of some box or other up above you. Until you get accustomed to it it's very nervous work, I can tell you. Then they're always changing the animals about so. You think you know all about a cage one day, and the very next you are frightened into fits by something new bouncing out at you—something you've never seen before. And as for cats, the gardens are full of them."

"Then why do you stay here?"

"Because it's my home, for one thing, and, besides, it has its advantages. Food is plentiful and of great variety, and there are all kinds of cosy nooks and corners for nesting. You haven't seen my nest? No. Well, you should. I was thinking of sending it to some college. It would make a good examination paper for students."

"What do you mean?"

"That it would take a very good naturalist indeed to say what it was made of. Outside it is straw and hay, with a lot of yak-tail hairs worked in and tufts of bison-wool, and just under the entrance there is a curl that I found in the gnu's place. Inside, of course, it is all feathers, and such a mixture! I don't know what they all are myself, but there are emu's, a golden eagle's, and fluff off a young sea-gull, and swan's-down, and ever so many more. And as for my food, it is made up of half the crops of the world—grains that I do not know the names of and most extraordinary fruits. I had a friend who lives in the Gray's Inn Road staying with me once for a week, and she said she never saw such outlandish victuals in all her life, not even at the West India Docks, where one of her husbands picked up a pimento pepper, thinking it was something else, and died in a fit on the spot. Talking of fits, I nearly had one this afternoon. I was picking up crumbs in Victor's den—he is the Queen's lion, you know—for somebody had thrown him a bit of bun, when all of a sudden he made a grab at me. You wouldn't have thought a lion would have done such a thing, would you? Nor would I. And it was a nasty, mean trick, I call it. And the other day I went into the Reptile House with one or two more, the windows being open for the heat, and seeing some bread going to waste in one of the tanks, down I went to get it, and no sooner had I sat down than snap went the thing I was sitting upon, and there was such a rumpus, all

a-swishing and a-swashing about! They said I had sat down on a crocodile's head. Perhaps I did, but it was the crocodile's fault for looking so like a bit of old wood; and they feed them on sparrows, they say, which I call a shame——"

How long the bird "that loves to chirp and talk" would have gone on I don't know, but the rhinoceros woke up and snorted, and my garrulous friend vanished.

What thorough little Britishers these sparrows are, with their robust independence, their stubborn retention of original ideas and obstinate assertion of rights, their preference for communities, and their dogged dislike of hybridisation! Like ourselves, they are thoroughly insular, and, like ourselves, the greatest of travellers and colonists, aggressive, intrusive, and, under hard knocks, self-possessed and philosophical. The sparrow is really the typical Briton, and ought to be our

"THE FRIGHT MY MOTHER GOT THEN SHE NEVER GOT OVER."

national bird. Cowper, I know, addresses it as "meanest of the feathered race," and goes on to reflect upon its moral character in most slanderous fashion; and Prior has these dreadful lines—

> Begone! With flagging wings sit down
> On some old penthouse near the town.
> In brewers' stables peck thy grain,
> Then wash it down with puddled rain;
> And hear thy dirty offspring squall
> From bottles on a suburb wall.

But poets don't matter much. Facts are all in favour of the sparrow. It goes with our race wherever it goes. From Durban it marched to Ulundi, and no doubt is flourishing in Zululand. From India it went to Cabul and Candahar, and by this time, no doubt, has spread to Bokhara and met the Russian on the Pamirs. The track of a commissariat wagon or a caravan is quite enough for the sparrow. Where white men go it follows. Ten years ago I drew "the sparrow line" of the United States. It had then reached Omaha from the West, and Salt Lake City from the East. By this time, I expect, it has routed the snow-birds out of Cheyenne, and lords it right across the continent. In Australia and Canada the bird is at home, and daybreak in the Mauritius or Ceylon brings with it the morning chirp of the sparrow. And how compendiously here in Regent's Park he finds all the experiences of travel collected together! Let sparrows from all the empire come, and not one of them need find itself abroad. Here they can feed as they have been accustomed to feed, and sleep among creatures with which in the tropics or the snows they have become familiar. It is only the bird home-born, home-bred that finds the Zoo a little puzzling at first. When drinking by a pond, a sea-lion may put up his head, or when finishing a scrap of cherry in the lemur's cage, a long thin hand may come stealthily down from above. These developments are unexpected—once. But thereafter the sparrow knows all about them, and the next time takes no more notice of a sea-lion than it does of a passing express, and keeps as far away from lemurs as it does from ordinary cats. But watch them when and where you please, you never see the sparrow astonished. Except, of course, when it sits on a rhinoceros's nose.

"YOU WOULDN'T HAVE THOUGHT A LION WOULD HAVE DONE SUCH A THING."

A SPRIG OF HEATHER.

By E. PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM.

THAT was a halcyon month for Fred and for me—the month we spent with Dick down at his bungalow on the Norfolk coast. Never was anything more opportune than Dick's invitation. We were in one of the tightest corners I ever remember. Davids had turned rusty; nothing that we could either of us turn out seemed in the least to satisfy those mysterious purchasers of his. He had put his foot down firmly. He would not look at another picture for a month! And there we were, owing three weeks' rent, and our credit pledged up to the hilt at every commercial establishment in the neighbourhood. Even Jones the tobacconist—Jones the long-suffering and good-natured—had grumbled at that last half-pound of flake we had sent for, and had enclosed in the box our joint account, with an expression of his peremptory desire for some manner of settlement. And with it all the thermometer was 90 deg. in the shade, and the air of Stile's Row was fœtid. We sat in our shirt-sleeves before the open window and stewed. The sight of a cab passing by laden with seaside luggage, steamer chairs and travelling-easel, white umbrella and golf-clubs, came like the last straw. Fred got up and kicked our one hassock to the other end of the room.

"Oh, d—n!" he exclaimed savagely. "I beg your pardon, old chap. It's so beastly stuffy."

I murmured a sympathetic assent. It was undeniably stuffy.

"Fancy," Fred continued softly, with his eyes fixed upon me; "fancy a strong fresh sea breeze, just a dash of brine in it you know, and sunshine fresh from heaven—not focussed upon us through the fogs and evil odours of this Sodom of a city! Bah! Isn't it enough to make a man sick with longing?"

"It is," I groaned. "Pass the tobacco and shut up."

I relit my pipe, and Fred followed suit. The blue cloud around us grew thicker, and our hearts grew heavier. Then came Dick bounding into the room with hot, eager face and a roar of greeting.

"Hurrah! you fellows," he exclaimed. "I've an idea. Where's my pipe?"

He went to the mantelpiece and selected his own cherished briar. He still kept it in the old place, although sometimes we saw nothing of him for a month together.

"Hand over the baccy," he continued after a preliminary and apparently satisfactory blow down the stem.

Fred passed the already half-empty box with a dismal glance at its diminishing contents. Dick helped himself recklessly. His pipe had a large bowl, and he pressed the tobacco down with an iron fore-finger. I began to foresee the climax of our miseries—a tobaccoless evening.

"How are things?" he inquired tersely.

"Bad," Fred growled.

"Disgustingly bad," I echoed.

"Ah, I thought they might be," Dick continued with unabated cheerfulness. "Wrong time of the year to work. Wrong time of the year to try and sell pictures. Now, you chaps, attention!"

We composed ourselves to listen. Dick evidently had something to say. He waited until his pipe was well alight, and then commenced.

"You fellows, you know, haven't treated me exactly well since I came into my tin," he said slowly. "I haven't said much about it, but I'm going to have my little growl now. You won't come to see me because I live in Mayfair. You wouldn't even come to shoot with me last September because——"

I laid my hand upon his arm.

"Shut up, Dick," I said firmly. "We've been through all this before. What's the good of it? You know why we don't come. Our ways are not Mayfair ways, neither are our clothes. It's good of you to want us, but it's no go. We shouldn't be comfortable, and you wouldn't."

"And as to shooting," Fred put in, "we haven't a gun between us, nor any of the rig-out. Owen's quite right. We're

glad to see you here, Dick, and we're glad—jolly glad—that you don't forget us. I hope we'll always be pals—the three of us—and all that; but it's no use closing our eyes to facts, is it? You belong to a different world now. You didn't come here to kick against the pricks again, surely?"

Dick cheered up. A gleam of satisfaction shone in his blue eyes.

"No, I did not," he assented. "The fact is, I've got you this time on toast, both of you. I saw an advertisement in last week's *Field*—Bungalow to let on the Norfolk coast, close to sea; bathing, fishing, golf, and all the rest of it. I went down the day before yesterday and took it straight away. Now listen to me seriously. This is not a request; it is not an invitation. I insist upon it. You two fellows have just got to pack up and go down with me to-morrow. Not one other soul is going to be there except the servants. We'll have a glorious time. You can make it pay too! Lots of pretty bits among the cliffs, and such a sea! Fred, old boy, it's on, isn't it? Owen, old chap?"

Fred and I exchanged rapid glances.

"No other visitors did you say, Dick? None of your own people even?" I inquired with assumed carelessness.

"Not a soul except us three, I pledge you my word," Dick declared earnestly. "No pier, no dressing up or promenading, or any of that sort of thing. Just flannels and a good old comfortable time!"

Fred went to our vaulting-bar, and performed a fancy acrobatic feat of his own invention.

"Hurrah!" he exclaimed, coming down upon his head. "It's on! Good old Dick!"

And in a more dignified manner I signified our acceptance of Dick's invitation.

* * * *

What a time that was—what a halcyon month! It stands for ever alone in the wilderness of our memories, marked with a great white stone. The bungalow was simply perfect. It stood on a little tableland of green lawn, between two mighty cliffs, with a forest of pines and firs behind, and the sea, the blue sparkling sea, stretching away in front. The first breath of the place as we drove from the station in the evening was like a strong sweet tonic, and that night we were like children, walking backwards and forwards upon the cliffs, sniffing the breeze, and watching the lights far out at sea.

We breakfasted the next morning in a long low room, whose open windows looked full upon the German Ocean—and such a breakfast it was! Dick was always famous at the commissariat! Stile's Row seemed very far away.

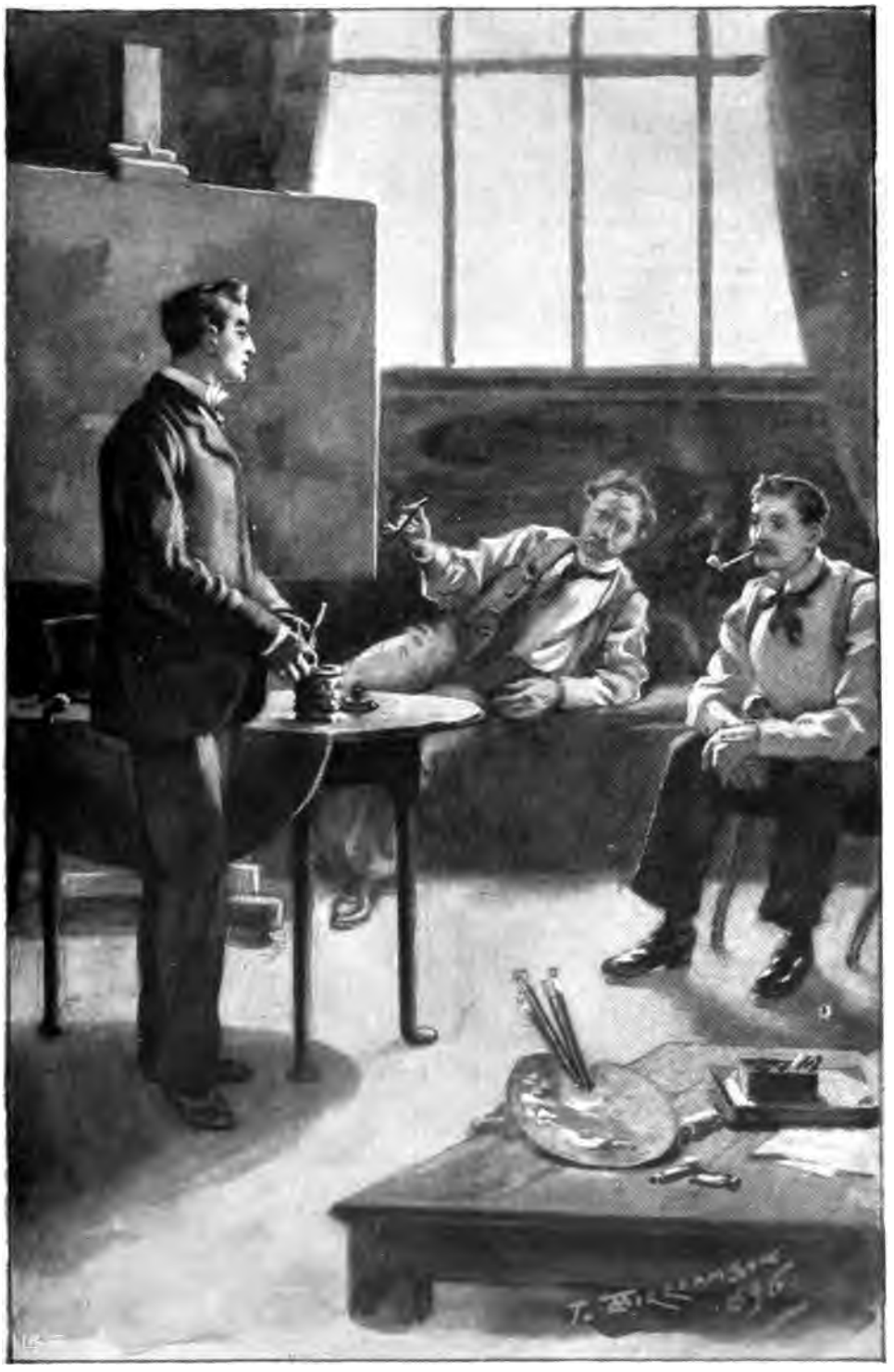
"I don't know whether you fellows care about swimming," Dick said as we filled our pipes. "There are steps right away down to the beach from the bottom of the garden there, and I've had a tent fixed up and some bathing togs sent in. What do you say?"

What did we say! Not much. But with the first plunge into the salt water the burden of years was gone, the poison of weariness and disappointment had glided from out our veins, and faded away in thin air. We were boys again, animal creatures only, glorying in our strength, and the power of cleaving those long blue waves, whose murmuring and gurgling in our ears was like the sweetest of all music. Stroke for stroke, shoulder to shoulder, through the cool, rushing waters we swam. I opened my arms to the sea, and the joy of it was like the joy of fine wine. Most glorious of all physical emotions is the delight of meeting and buffeting those rolling waves.

That was a halcyon time indeed. Dick had a little yacht there, and we sailed her up and down the coast, lounging on the deck with the sunlight we had longed for all around us, and the salt spray flying in our faces. At the end of a week or so we began to feel a healthy desire for work, and on one hot day we fetched out our easels and settled down upon the cliffs in a spot where only choice of subject was difficult. And on that first day commenced our episode.

Our episode, of course, was feminine. She came up behind us with Dick and her father, just as we had got fairly to work. She had brown hair, which rippled and waved as a woman's should, a curiously childlike face, and large soft eyes. She was wearing a brown holland gown with a bunch of heather stuck in her bosom. She was fresh, and sweet, and well bred. That is all I know about her. Fred could have gone on describing her for an hour; but this is not Fred's story.

General Chesham, her father, lived in the white house we could see through the trees, and he was Dick's nearest neighbour. He was an Anglo-Indian, genial, hearty, and good-humoured. They stayed for some time, and the girl talked all the while to Fred, preferring, as I could see, his dashing style and easy manipulation



"HOW ARE THINGS?" HE INQUIRED TERSELY.

of colour to my own slower, and, in a sense, more laborious work. I never knew what they talked about then or on those other days; but they certainly did talk a good deal, and to some purpose. Morning after morning she came gliding down to us, flitting in and out of the pine-trees in her father's grounds, a soft white figure in the glancing sunlight, and blithely crossing the cliffs towards our chosen spot, with a man-servant behind bearing her easel. She, too, painted, not at all badly, and she was never weary of talking about art and the beauty of devoting one's life to it. To amuse her, Fred would tell her stories of our life in London, dwelling only upon the bright side of it, treating our impecuniosity as a joke, and blurring over our hardships. She sat and listened as though entranced. She was by no means an ordinary girl, and sometimes as I watched her face upturned to Fred's, I became conscious of a dim feeling of uneasiness. I wished that her father would interfere. She certainly had more liberty than was good for her. But, after all, it seemed to be no business of mine. It was the first holiday I had had for years, and it might be the last for many more. I put away all thoughts of trouble. I would have none of them. The days were golden with June sunshine and sweet with the perfume of fragrant winds. I read poetry among the cliffs, and now and then I began to dream again. Not altogether happy dreams are those when youth—or, at any rate, youth's most buoyant season—has gone, and a bushel of bright hopes has changed into a handful of dry sticks. Yet I was thankful enough to find that the capacity still lingered. To be past the age of dreams is to stand upon the threshold of death—the death of mediocre content, or mortally wounded sensibility. So I was glad to plant my foot once more—even though with difficulty—upon the borderland of the world of strange fancies—that glittering world of dreams.

But while I dreamed of dead things, Fred was drifting into a living trouble. I was walking homewards one evening through the heather, when I came suddenly upon two figures. Their easels were side by side; a field of waving scarlet poppies and yellowing corn ran down the sloping cliff to the sea before them. But they were not painting. She was standing, bending over him, her hands upon his shoulders; he was leaning forward, with his head bent low. And the light upon their faces was that light which comes but once in a lifetime, and which no man can mistake.

I dropped my easel with a crash, and they both started round.

"How you frightened us, Mr. Wrathall!" the girl cried, looking at me with flushed face and not too friendly aspect.

"Not so much as you frightened me," I answered gravely. "We shall have to hurry, sha'n't we, Fred?" I added.

The colour had mounted to his sunburnt brow, but he met my steady gaze fearlessly. I had done wrong to doubt Fred for a moment. Poor old chap!

I passed my arm through his when the girl had gone. He commenced at once. His voice shook several times. Poor old chap!

"It isn't my fault, Owen," he said; "at least, I think not. I have never said a single word to her which her father might not have heard. I see now, though, that it was not well for us to have been together so much. I thought that I was the only one who could suffer. I used to be fond of girls, you know—that sort of girl; and lately—well, the kind of feminine society we can command isn't exactly edifying, is it?" he broke off, with a hard little laugh. "Well, it's over!"

I pressed his arm.

"Brace up, old chap!" I murmured. "We've had a glorious time. Nine-thirty's the morning train, I think. You can manage that?"

He nodded, and we went in to dinner. I felt a brute, but what else was there to do?

* * * *

Stile's Row had never seemed more cheerless than when we slowly trudged up those interminable flights of stairs and unlocked our door. Yet I, at any rate, was a better man. We were both sunburnt—as brown as berries—and we were bringing back work which we should have no need to hawk about. We could pay our debts, and start with a bit in hand. We talked this over, smoking a late pipe, and Fred did his best to be cheerful. When we parted he smiled quite bravely.

"Don't you bother about me, Owen," he said as we clasped hands the last thing, an old habit of ours. "I'm hit, but not mortally. And—and I wouldn't be without the memory of that month—not for worlds."

His voice shook a little, and we both looked out of window at the entrancing vision of grey roofs stretching away in a dreary wilderness to the smoke-begrimed horizon. Then we went to our hard little

TO AMUSE HER, FRED WOULD TELL HER STORIES OF OUR LIFE IN LONDON.

beds and made mild jokes at our short lapse into luxury. But when I woke up in the middle of the night Fred was sitting on the window-sill, half dressed and smoking. I let him be. A fellow with grit in him gets over those things better without sympathy. I too had spent nights like that. Memory is a sweet torturer; yet who would not sometimes be a victim?

We sold our pictures well, and we went to work in grim earnest A month passed. Then, one night, there was a timid knock at the door, and she walked in.

I sprang to my feet and stood between them. Fred was off his guard with a sudden joy, and had I not been there she would have been in his arms.

"Miss Chesham!" I exclaimed breathlessly. "Are you alone?"

She set down a dressing-bag which she had been carrying, and for a moment her eyes met mine defiantly.

"Yes, I am. I have run away. I am going to be an artist. I was miserable at home."

She held out her hands to Fred. He took them gravely; but he kept her at arm's length.

"Do they know where you have come?" I asked sternly. She shook her head, impatient at my questioning.

"No. I shall write and tell them presently. Mr. Montavon—Fred—you are not angry? You don't seem at all pleased to see me!"

I suppose she knew that he cared, and she had hoped to find him alone. But I stood between them.

"You ought not to have come here," I said. "It is not a fit place for you."

Her lips trembled. She stamped her foot. She was half crying, half furiously angry with me. For all her child's face she was bewitchingly pretty.

"I did not come here to see you," she exclaimed. "You have no right to interfere. You are very horrid. Fred, say that you are glad to see me!"

"I cannot," he answered hoarsely. "Wrathall is right. It sounds cruel, but it is right! This is not a fit place for you! You must go away!"

"I cannot," she answered doggedly. "I do not know a soul in London. I have some money, plenty of money, and I am going to take a studio here and paint. You talk to me as though I were a child. I am not a child! I am a woman, and women do those things I know. You treat me as though I were a girl who had run away from school. Don't be cruel, please! Let me stay here! I shall be no trouble, and I want to take that empty studio you told me about. I do not mind roughing it—not a little bit, Fred!"

He shook his head bravely. He could not trust himself to speak. She sat down on an empty box—our last chair had given way—and sobbed. Fred and I looked at one another. We had neither of us contemplated anything like this. I went up to him.

"Will you leave it to me, Fred?" I asked, laying my hand upon his shoulder.

He nodded.

"Yes. Take her away, old chap—quickly."

I snatched up my hat, and, hastily slipping off my smock, put on my most decent coat.

"Miss Chesham," I said firmly, "will you come with me, please?"

She stood up, wiping her eyes.

"No, I won't!" she answered. "I hate you! Fred!"

He shook his head, and kept away from her.

"You don't seem to understand," he said quietly. "Look around you. This is where and how we live. How——"

"It's all right, only it wants a good cleaning," she interposed. "Those cabinets are dreadful. Your landlady ought to be ashamed of herself."

"I daresay," Fred continued, "she thinks the same of us. We are nearly always behind with our rent. We earn just enough to keep body and soul together—and only just enough. There is not a woman in the whole building. It is not a fit place for women."

"You do not care for me," she cried with feminine irrelevance. "You have forgotten—those days."

"I shall never forget them," he answered; "but you must go away. Go with Wrathall, please. Do as he tells you. It is best."

She held out her hand to him, and he raised it gently to his lips. Then she let me lead her down the stairs. Her own eyes were blinded with tears. Outside we found a hansom, and I handed her in.

"Eighteen, Hereford Gardens," I told the driver. She pulled down her veil, and we spoke never a word all the way. I knew that she hated me. Yet she did everything as I told her.

A man-servant opened the door. To my great relief, his mistress was at home. She came to us in a moment or two—a stern-faced, grey-haired old lady, yet kindly enough, as I knew well. When she saw me, she stopped short.

"What, Owen!" she cried.

"Yes, Aunt," I answered. "I have come to ask you a favour. This young lady is the daughter of General Chesham, of Norfolk, and owing to an unfortunate accident she finds herself in London alone. Will you receive her as your guest until her father can take her away?"

She held out her hand to the girl, and I breathed freely.

"I had hoped, Owen," she said, with a shade of reproach in her tone, "that the first favour you have thought fit to ask me would have been for yourself. However, I shall be exceedingly glad to receive Miss Chesham. I know her father quite well."

I left them together, and walked back with a sense of huge relief. Fred was striding up and down the studio waiting for me.

"I have left her at my aunt's in Hereford Gardens," I said. "She will be all right there."

"You are a brick," he declared. He knew that it had cost me something to ask that favour.

"And now we must telegraph to her father," I reminded him. "What shall we say?"

But there was no need to write that telegram. There was a sharp knock at our door, and the General himself appeared upon the threshold. He was white with fury. Fred was standing by his easel, and he marched straight up to him.

"Where is my daughter?" he thundered. "What have you done with her, you—blackguard?"

I stepped between them.

"Your daughter, General Chesham, is quite safe," I told him. "She is with my aunt, Lady Wrathall, at Eighteen, Hereford Gardens."

He drew a long breath and looked at me from underneath his bushy eyebrows.

"Are you telling me the truth, Sir?" he asked sternly.

"We are neither of us," I answered, "in the habit of telling untruths; nor are we accustomed to be addressed in such a fashion. Your daughter called here about an hour ago. We gathered that she had left home unknown to you, and we persuaded her to go to my aunt's. I have just returned from escorting her there."

He held out his hand. "Sir, I thank you," he said. "I apologise. Mr. Montavon, pray forgive my use of so unwarrantable an epithet. I was excited and nervous. Pray accept my apology."

Fred shook hands with him silently. Then he turned to me again.

"Eighteen, Hereford Gardens, I think you said. I will go there at once."

"It would be as well," I answered. "Allow me to light you downstairs."

When I returned Fred was groping upon the floor. He got up with a little sprig of heather in his hand. I pretended not to see him slip it into his pocket.

"What mad creatures girls are!" I remarked, lighting my pipe, with my back to him.

"Very," he answered absently.

The girl's name was Dorothy.

THE COURTIER'S COURTSHIP TO HIS MISTRESS:

Will ye love me, lady sweet?
You are young, and love is meet.
Out alas! who then will sport thee?
Wanton yet in the spring:
Love is a pretty thing.
Kiss sweet as lovers do;
Prove kind to them that woo.

THE MISTRESS TO THE COURTIER:

Fie away, fie away! fie, fie, fie
No, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, not I!
I'll live a maid till I be forty.

THE RECEIVING ROOM OF THE LONDON HOSPITAL.

By FRANCES H. LOW.

WHY do not some of our younger painters, instead of giving us endless pictures of fashionable beauties in smart frocks, or Normandy peasant women, come down to the receiving room of the London Hospital and study, and put upon their canvases, the eternal permanent scenes of modern civilisation that are unfolded there? In hours of darkness and sunlight, the doors of the receiving room are ever open and ceaselessly thronged by humanity of diverse ages, races, physiognomies, and characters. The fastidious spectator, accustomed to the polished conventionalities of social life, will find it necessary upon his first acquaintanceship with this aspect of human affairs, to brace his nerves, that he may not yield to the impulse of flight with which he is threatened by a spectacle that at a superficial glance only repels and disgusts. It is like looking at a great composition by Hogarth, where all the ugliness of human nature seems to stand out and arrest and mock the eye. But just as a careful student of the work of this great man recognises, upon a more attentive study, the moral order and even beauty that flourish amidst the painter's dark and wild representations of human life, so the spectator here gradually finds his disgust and horror giving way to feelings of interest, pity, sympathy, and even pleasure; and thereby learns the true elements of which the mass is composed. To the artist, the ethnologist, and the psychologist the ever-moving play of life that is enacted here is of ceaseless interest. There are no furniture faces, no artificial expressions, no masks defying distinctions of temperament and character. It is naked reality, sometimes startling in its brutality, often heart-touching in its pathos, and always instructive and interesting and exciting to a reflective mind. There is scarce a group which has not in it some quality or feature that sets one pondering.

Upon the front row of the benches that fill the body of the small room, which is partitioned off into medical and surgical examination-rooms, sit a couple of young women, scarcely more than girls, each with a child on her lap, each alike in externals and in the lack of all grace that makes womanhood attractive, and both ragged, with dirty faces, seamed by sickness and poverty. And yet, in the way one of them holds her child, in the softened manner with which she looks upon its face and hushes its cries, there is something of womanliness and maternity; while in the other there is nothing but a hard indifference and insensibility to all human feelings, that extend to the child of her bosom as to the rest of the universe. Close by sits another woman, still young and not uncomely, but with all hope extinguished from her face, as she endeavours to support from falling the drunken companion of her misery. As the eye ranges over these waiting figures, what histories of misspent lives may be read in their features! what revelations of character and weakness and viciousness! what gradations of virtue and struggle and deterioration! What contradictions, too, and arresting contrasts! Side by side with a man, from whose shocking brute-beast countenance all human qualities have been obliterated, there sits a young work-girl, whose thin chin, delicately moulded cheek, and soft pensive blue eyes, recall the picture of some mediæval painter, and diffuse something of spiritual beauty around her. It is these glimpses and touches that prevent the ugliness and gloom from becoming unbearable, reminding one that here, as elsewhere in life, the admixture of the tragic and comic, of the debasing and divine, of the wretched and the joyous, is to be found jumbled together at every turn.

In the daytime, notwithstanding the evidences of pain and privation and evil with which the eye is incessantly confronted and dismayed, there is a constant stream of diverting and mirth-provoking incidents and expressions of human nature, arising in the main from the naïve artlessness with which ignorant persons present their ailments, account for their nature and causes, and incidentally exhibit their philosophy of life; and that might furnish a profitable field for the romancer of low

IN THE RECEIVING ROOM, LONDON HOSPITAL.

life. A big strong fellow, whose short hair suggested associations of an uncomplimentary nature, came in complaining of his tooth. Asked to give a history of his ailment he said: "I goes to a dentist and 'e says, 'You must 'ev that tooth out.' Then he gets three chaps to sit on my 'ed, and he goes for me and he pulls out the tooth, and here it is, Sir," and he brings an uninviting specimen out of his pocket.

"Well," says the doctor, examining the object, "I should think that must have hurt you."

"Well, I reckon it did, Sir; and ther'd 'a been some blood drawed if it weren't for them fellows a 'olding of me down; and then I give him fourpence, and 'e says: 'You'd better git to the 'orspital'!" The "dentist," who was probably a coalheaver by trade, had taken out half the poor fellow's jaw, with the result that the bone had become necrosed, and a severe operation was necessitated.

An incident, which for its farcical situation was unmatched, was that wherein the central figure was an astonishingly stout woman. She was enormous in size and bulk, and the rather small, solemn physician, to whom she was relating her distressing symptoms, looked as if he might have been her little son. At the end of the story he said—

"Well, you know, Missis, you're too stout. That's what's the matter with you. We must get you down."

"Well, Sir, that wouldn't do. How'd I get my livin'?"

"Get your living?" said the young doctor, without displaying any surprise—the young medical men here are never astonished at anything—"what do you mean?"

"Well, it wouldn't soot for me to be thin like them lydies." (This was a retaliation to certain ladies who had been making jeering allusions to the other's size.) "I'm up at Smith's—Smith's fat woman, Sir—I dessay you've been up there. There's nothing to laugh at." This was a protest against the smiles of

some of the officials, who immediately regained their professional air of formality and discussed the case with suitable gravity; for sufferers in the lower walks of social life do not like anything which looks like trifling with their ailments, however insignificant their nature. The lady is cheered up by some medicine (great is the belief of the uneducated classes in the power of medicine), the case recorded—for under the perfect organisation that prevails, there is kept a register of every case, no matter how small—and the next is investigated.

It may be that the next half-a-dozen persons are suffering from nothing more perilous than the effects of over-indulgence in favourite meats and drinks; or there may be a succession of serious injuries, that make a decisive call upon the resources of the institution, the presence of mind of everyone concerned, and the prompt activities of the surgeons. Here is a man with typhoid, for whom admission must

IN THE RECEIVING ROOM, LONDON HOSPITAL.

be made at once in the wards; there a child with advanced diphtheria, requiring instantly the operation of tracheotomy; here a person with smallpox, for whom the Asylum ambulance is forthwith dispatched; and there half-a-dozen men lying upon stretchers, apparently lifeless. The impassive policemen, after having deposited them and made notes, depart; but one of their mates informs the surgeon that they have been "sucking the monkey." They are dock labourers, who have bored a hole in a keg of spirits, inserted a straw therein, and drunk themselves into a condition of alcoholic poisoning. Half-a-dozen of the medical staff are immediately on the spot, screens are placed round, the stomach-pump used, students told off to look after them for a considerable period, and presently the men, shamefaced, sheepish, and shaken, are well enough to go off to their homes. Railway smashes, fires, and scaffolding accidents often contribute a dozen injured persons at once; but there is no excitement, no disorder; everything is in its precise place; bandages, splints, anæsthetics, and instruments are ever ready for use; and the trained experts—the serene Sister, picturesque in her pale-blue linen frock, snow-white cap and apron; her young subordinates, skilled, prepared, and composed; porters to lift and hold, surgeons to operate—all are there.

Towards night-time on Saturdays the more ugly depraved aspect of the scene makes itself felt. Wages have been paid, and are rapidly being converted into the one prime necessity of life to a large proportion of this population, and the gin-shops are crammed with boisterous men and women. This is the first act in the squalid performance. The next is blows, oaths, and tears, for women play a sadly prominent part in these life-dramas. Any weapon that comes handy serves, and the astonishing nature of some of the wounds is due to the peculiar instrument that happened to be near at the moment of the quarrel. If blood flows from the wound or scratch, however trifling or serious, the next stage is the "'orspital," and the victim, accompanied by a sympathetic male or female—according to the sex—in a slightly less advanced condition of insobriety, walks along relating her wrongs at the top of her voice. Sometimes, owing to the hardness of the missile, or the blind fury of its projector, the injury is more severe: the police ambulance has to be sent for, and the unconscious burden is brought to the gate of the big, ugly Temple of Healing and Death, which, facing the thronged and tumultuous highway, stands dark and silent, its portals ever wide open and free, beyond which is ceaselessly waged the battle against the King of Terrors. The porter exercises no discretion of admission. Every man, woman, or child, drunk or sober, clean or vile, has a right to see a doctor either day or night. After dark, the chime of a bell notifies to the inside porter the approach of a new pilgrim. The night-nurse ascertains the nature of the ill, and, whether of import or not, summons instantaneous medical aid. So absurdly trifling is the scratch or ache at times, that it is not without a pang that nurse or porter must fulfil the regulations, and signal for the appointed night men, who, after, perhaps, a day of incessant work in the wards, have snatched a few moments for a pipe or a breath of pure air in the gardens in the rear. But in they hasten and set about their business.

Physicians and surgeons in the receiving room are all qualified men, but some are little more than boys in appearance, in spite of a certain hardness and weariness visible upon their faces, that bespeak the strain gone through. And what an apprenticeship it is for a young man! What a page of life! What a volume of human destiny is unfolded before his inexperienced gaze, bearing in black irrevocable letters for him to read who will the lessons that retributive Nature stamps upon those who heed not and break her decrees! One wonders what system of morals, or religion, or ethics ever propounded could teach a man with greater solemnity and impressiveness the consequences of men's weaknesses and vices and sensual passions, and their awful, far-reaching effect upon the innocent. Of the rollicking, jovial Bob Sawyer there is no trace in modern hospital surgeons. Their serious, impassive faces and business-like inquiries, acquired after considerable experience of the material upon which they operate, strike a spectator as slightly inhuman at first; but a receiving room is no place for the expression of sympathetic emotion on the part of the surgeon, even if daily contact had not necessarily blunted the first generous sensation of horror that is felt by a humane person in the infliction of pain. But of all needful qualities involved they have plenty. Order, presence of mind, a courageous grappling with what must excite in the ordinary breast feelings of disgust and loathing and even brutality, a steadfast pursuance of duty, and a dexterity and thoroughness that cannot be too highly praised.

Of ethnological interest in this great hospital there is no end. Here is a big, fat, black-haired, unwashed Jewess, sitting cheek by jowl with a rosy-faced girl, a perfect type of youthful Saxon womanhood. Beyond sits a swarthy, olive - skinned Oriental, and looking up at his face with the keenest interest, a child flaxen-haired and fair as an angel. Near by is another Jew of a different type, probably a Pole, one of those Jews with the intense thinking physiognomy that characterises the intellectual men of his race. He looks as if he ought to be a poet or prophet. Fewell, the excellent, big-voiced, good-hearted night porter, tells me he is a

A SERIOUS CASE BROUGHT IN BY SISTERS OF CHARITY.

particularly cunning villain, who has been off and on a pretty constant visitor to the hospital. What is the reason of the universal prejudice against the Jews? In East London, at any rate, they have few

FEWELL, THE NIGHT PORTER.

opportunities of indulging in their racial propensities of money-getting and avarice; yet the most drunken and disreputable scamp calling himself a Christian will regard a Jew with scorn and hatred. That the sons of Israel are immeasurably dirty (where, by the way, are the good old cleansings of the Biblical Law?) is true; but then they are equalled, if not excelled, by their Gentile brethren. Fewell, who has been for some twenty years an integral part of the institution, and who has managed to retain an optimistic and humorous attitude towards life, thinks that the prejudice is an unjust one.

"I like to be fair," says he (was there ever an Englishman who did not pride himself on his justness?); "and I think the Jews are very unjustly run down. I've never known, all the time I've been here, a single husband or wife or child come to this hospital owing to ill-treatment from one another. I wish as much could be said of the Christians." They are very fond of their children; but, unfortunately, this fondness does not take the direction of applying soap and water, and the amount of dirt under which a Hebrew child can flourish is really a testimony to the vitality of the stock. The difference of race temperament strikes one curiously. A Jewish child, who is perhaps but slightly injured, is the subject of intense anxiety to its mother; and whilst the house-surgeon binds up its wound, the daughter of Isaac has much to do to repress her own agony, and cries repeatedly in terms of anguished lament, "Moses, Moses, don't cry, darling!" (I am obliged to give the English equivalent, being unequal to the orthography of the corrupt Polish-Hebrew phrase.) The stoical English mother is made of other stuff. She not only preserves her *sangfroid*, but, after a variety of rough admonitions, consoles the suffering child with the prospect of a beating if it screams.

As it goes on towards midnight, the room gets fuller and fuller, and the young men are kept ceaselessly busy. Little children who ought long ago to be in bed come toddling in, brought by some toddler a few years older. Sometimes the infant, with the ways of its kind, has tumbled off a chair, sometimes it has fallen into boiling water, or received injuries in the course of a difference between its parents. Often the malady is no sudden one, and the visit to the hospital having been put off as long as possible, the little collapsed child is beyond the aid of science, and is only brought into the wards to die. Most of the adults are in varying degrees of insobriety, and not a few of them are well-known habitués, who arrive at the hospital on Saturday nights for their scalp-wounds to be dressed, with the same unvarying punctuality with which better-class persons repair to church on Sundays.

"Well, Ma'am, what's the matter with you this time?" asks a house-surgeon of a lady, whose attire bespeaks a careless disregard of ordinary conventional

proprieties. Her head is streaming with blood, and she is in the fearful condition that characterises the woman-drunkard.

"We just 'ad a few words, and he says, 'Don't be silly,' and then I fell down the steps. He says, 'Don't be silly.'"

"What did he do it with?" asks Mr. J., proceeding to cut the repulsive-looking hair, sponge the wound, and strap and bandage it. A female friend, who has accompanied the injured lady—no female in whatever rank of life considers it etiquette to come to the hospital unaccompanied by another—volunteers the information that it was the "pewter pot"; and Fewell, who knows everybody's antecedents, tells us there is some justification

A SON OF ISRAEL.

for the husband of the wretched drunken creature, as he is a hard-working, respectable man.

Persons who dislike fanaticism and anything that looks like a curtailment of the legitimate enjoyments of life have much ado here to keep their judgment sound. As men and women come in, sullen or frenzied with drink, their features dimmed by sensuality, the mind begins to get unbalanced. The rooms, the walls, seem reeling: one looks round expecting to see the horrid signs in persons of known respectability and estimation, and is seized with a hideous, night-marish doubt as to one's own innocence. Only by a resolute effort can one preserve sanity of judgment and humanity of heart, and, whilst admitting the fearful evils, physical and mental, of which alcohol is directly productive, temper condemnations with a recollection of the economic conditions under which these people live, the dire and deadly fight against starvation in which they are ceaselessly engaged, and the manifold and healthy seeds of goodness and kindness that are scattered by some of the most abandoned. But one's moralising is perpetually intercepted here by incidents of reality. Hardly has the glance followed some half-a-dozen ruffianly figures who have come in together, all more or less scratched and damaged by fighting, into the surgeon's room, when cries and oaths compel our presence; for the combatants, left alone for a few seconds, have fallen to again with unabated ardour, and the apartment is a field of battle and bloodshed.

Perhaps the most astonishing feature of this side of life is the extreme care that is taken among the women to preserve distinctions of social rank, even when the superior person is hardly in a position to bear herself with any pride. An odd and diverting little scene took place in the tiny room where the women's injuries are attended to. A woman, far from sober, but of fairly respectable appearance and obviously not an habitual drunkard, was sitting shivering and ashamed whilst the surgeon attended to her wound. He went away for a moment, and another woman, whose features were branded with alcoholic excesses, and who was awaiting her turn, immediately commenced to cheer up her tearful companion, to whom, of course, she was a stranger.

"Don't you mind, dearie," she cried, in the shrill tone that is terribly familiar here. "I 'ad my leg bad last week," etc. Whereupon the other woman turned round to me, and said in an injured and disgusted voice—

"I don't know that lady that's talking to me. I don't know why she's talking to me. I'm not having anything to say to her, and I wouldn't live in the same street as such a lady."

And so, on, on goes the work of the weary young surgeons and the undaunted nurse, and in the desperate scrutiny of facts, one begins to wonder whether there is any good in all this sacrifice of time and labour and skill, and whether the humanity of modern civilised races is not the most infernal cruelty; for the preservation of wrecked and mutilated lives here means the production of countless other lives, and the forging of an endless chain of sin and iniquity. Here, too, is the saddest aspect of hospital work. For in the great educative influence of the wards, a man or woman must be irredeemably hardened who does not bear away, however transitorily, some glimpse of love and order and self-restraint; and even in the out-patients' department, where I have seen a great physician give a woman a practical demonstration in the art of feeding her infant, some permanent truth may be brought home to the mind, when the healer and teacher is week after week in intimate touch with the individual. But what can be done with the crowded procession of the receiving room, which is ever passing and vanishing for ever? It is well, however, not to permit the mind to dwell on this aspect of the problem, or at least to allow its dark insolubility to gain the mastery and paralyse energy and effort. Better to escape at intervals out of the chloroform-tainted atmosphere into the clear, starlit gardens that back the hospital walls. Here, too, perhaps, one may not be delivered from the unintelligibile mysteries of earth and human life. But already one's eyes have sought the blue empyrean with the majesty of its silent silver host; and in its message of peace, solemn, infinite, and eternal, which comes home to the troubled heart, there is that which sustains and reconciles.

A CONFLICT OF INTERESTS.

THE STORY OF "CAPTAIN" BALLARD.

By W. PETT RIDGE.

"CAPTAIN" BALLARD, sitting opposite to me in the tea-shop in the Rue de Rivoli, sells me a copy of *En Avant*, and places the coins with some care in a small leather purse. I offer my *St. James's*, and "Captain" Ballard reads an account of an interesting counterfeit coin case heard the previous morning at Clerkenwell Police-Court. She sighs when she reaches the finish of the report, and shakes her head and takes two more lumps of sugar.

"Ah," she says regretfully, "kerime, kerime, kerime! You can't stem it; you can't stop it; you can't retard it. On, on it goes, never ceasing, never ending. Ho, if only——"

I remark that there is presumably some attraction about the game.

"*I* never found it so," says "Captain" Ballard, with some tartness, smoothing her blue serge skirt. "It was always jolly 'ard work for me, that I *do* know. Before I found I 'd got a soul I was as much in the thick of it as 'ere and there a one, and I think I 'm entitled to speak a word or two on the subject. There was one affair I rec'lect——" She stopped herself. "It don't become any of us to brag onless we do it in a spirit of thenkfulness; but it does no 'arm to look back on them bad times, if only we can prove a warning to those dear bretheren and sisters who——"

When I manage to stop "Captain" Ballard's oration I ask her for particulars of the incident to which she has referred. "Captain" Ballard stirs the tea-pot, and leaning two elbows on the marble table, tells this tale.

* * * *

On the day after Sir Benjamin bought the picture at Christie's Miss Ballard was engaged as lady's maid to his daughter. It was one of those strokes of luck which do not occur often (so Miss Ballard says) in one lifetime, and the excellent character produced by the new maid, together with her ability to speak colloquial French, considerably assisted her engagement. This shows the advantage of writing one's own testimonials.

"Now look here, my dear"—Sir Benjamin never spoke to the servants; his young daughter had full control over them—"I want them all warned that just for a day or so this most valuable and delightful Velasquez—I 'm sure I can get more than I gave for it if I can only hit upon the right man—this picture will remain here; and I want everybody to keep their wits about them, Maggie, and there must be no loafers downstairs, or anything of that sort. See?"

"I understand, papa. This is Ballard, the new maid."

Sir Benjamin promptly turned his back upon Miss Ballard.

"Ask her whether she 's got a sweetheart?"

"No, indeed, Miss," said Miss Ballard with an indignant air. "I don't 'old with them for a single moment. I've got something better to do than bother my head about a pack of grinning——"

"Because if she had," said Sir Benjamin to his daughter, "she would have had to understand that he mustn't come hanging around here. I hope they all clearly comprehend that."

"I think they ought, papa. We are always reminding them of it."

"Anything else, Miss."

"No, Ballard. Make the acquaintance of the others, and try to work as quietly as you can and avoid all disturbance."

"You trust me, Miss, for that. I don't suppose a more amiable person than me has ever been born on this earth; and as for quietness, why I don't think you 'd find my equal. I 'm sure the last place I had—it was in the country certainly, but that don't affect the argument — they couldn't find words to express what they thought of me."

"Tell her to go, Maggie," shouted Sir Benjamin hotly.

Miss Ballard, going downstairs, immediately made inquiries in regard to this stringent, and to her possibly inconvenient, rule in regard to followers.

"It's as much as your life is worth," said Cook regretfully, "to try it on. It's awk'ard I admit; but what can't be cured must be endured."

"It don't show much sympathy to'rds your fellow-creatures," remarked Miss Ballard. "I don't see any 'arm myself of one young man calling now and again. One isn't like a 'ole regiment."

"Your young man a army man, may I ask?" inquired Cook.

"No, indeed," said Miss Ballard proudly. "I *do* draw the line somewhere. My friend is in business on his own account, and doing very well. He's been away on a—er—kind of 'oliday for some months——"

"Months?"

"Oh, well," said Miss Ballard, "if he likes to, why shouldn't he? He gets all his exes paid."

"I wonder whether I know his name?" said Cook.

"No," answered the new maid shortly, "you don't."

"You've been in good families, I suppose, before this?"

"Good enough."

"There's many a worse one than this," remarked Cook. "The young mistress knows what's right and she knows what's wrong, and she will have what's right. Once she finds out you're a-trying to play false with her, you get your month."

"I'm not trying to play false with her," declared Miss Ballard indignantly. "What do you mean by your 'ints?"

"I wasn't 'inting at all," answered Cook; "I was only just mentioning for your own private information out of the goodness of my 'eart, as you may say, that——"

"You keep the goodness of your 'eart to yourself, then," said the new maid definitely. "I can look after myself right enough."

"That's a good thing." Cook shivered with indignation. "I shouldn't think anyone else would want to do it for you. There's no need to fly all to pieces directly anyone 'appens to open their mouth; and whilst I think of it, perhaps you'll kindly step out of my kitchen and not interfere with me in my work with your silly gossip. I've got something else to do besides answering all your inquisitiveness."

"I'm going as fast as ever I can," said Miss Ballard, trembling, "and I bid you good afternoon."

"'Urry," said Cook.

When, later, a letter marked "Ergent" arrived addressed to Miss M. Ballard, Cook directed that it should be laid on the dresser so that Miss M. Ballard could find it if she liked. "Perhaps," added Cook, "it would learn her a lesson not to be so haughty in her manners. Civility," added Cook, with some severity, "civility becomes us all."

The house was late that night in retiring to rest. Several visitors called after dinner to see the Velasquez, and a South African person had offered Sir Benjamin a thousand pounds over and above the amount paid for the picture. At Sir Benjamin's express directions, his daughter locked the door very carefully, and placed the key on her bunch, and Miss Ballard took the key off the bunch with the dexterity that practice brings. Her spirits revived under the prospect of success, and if it had not been so late she would have sent a telegram to Huntingdon Street, Hoxton.

"As it is," said Miss Ballard to herself brightly, "this little trick will have to be executed by Number One. Jim will be cross at being out of it, but Jim must put up with that. It'll just show him that a woman's as capable if she only gets 'alf a chance as any amount of men. Jim has been just a leetle bit too 'igh and mighty once or twice of late, and though I didn't say anything, I didn't like the way he threw his boot at me the other night. It wasn't what *I* call etiquette."

Miss Ballard crept downstairs very carefully. She was fully dressed ready to go out as soon as she had cut the canvas from the frame. She did not mind leaving her box behind, inasmuch as it contained only sufficient lumber to make it feel heavy. The way out into the area would be the most convenient exit.

"Steady does it," remarked Miss Ballard, softly. "Where's that key and where's that knife?"

There was a glimmer of gas in the library, and the Velasquez could just be seen dimly on the easel in the corner. Miss Ballard considered it wise not to turn up the gas, and taking the knife she cut the painting very closely at the edge of the old frame. The knife was very keen, and the job was nearly completed (the top only remained to be severed) when suddenly there was a grating noise of a window opening. She started back, and closing the knife, placed it in her

HIS DAUGHTER LOCKED THE DOOR VERY CAREFULLY.

pocket. The window opened slowly, and presently a man swung himself into the room. To Miss Ballard's terror, he went straight to the corner where she was.

"I'm very sorry," she pleaded in a whisper. "I'd no idea you were watching; I 'aven't done any particular 'arm."

The man turned his bull's-eye on her and did not speak.

"I can tell you're a good sort, Sergeant," she went on, "from the kind look on your face." As a matter of fact, it was not possible to see his face; but it seemed a diplomatic thing to say. "I'm just going out of the 'ouse."

"Oh," he said, "just a-going are you? Not till I say you can go, young woman. You must kindly consider yourself my prisoner until I think fit to say otherwise. What is it? Case of going out to see your sweetheart, s'pose?"

"That was *just* it, Sergeant." The suggestion seemed to revive Miss Ballard's spirits. "You don't suppose for a moment, I hope, that it was anything else. I've got what you may call a unspotted character, and it isn't likely I should want to go and rob the plate, or anything of that kind. If you don't mind, I'll just step back to my room, thanking you for——"

"That's a nice old picture that," he said. The white shaft of light from his lantern waved round and settled on the Velasquez. "I'm a bit of a art lover myself, and——"

"Why," interrupted Miss Ballard, "you're not in uniform!"

"Well, I know that. Can't a 'tec dress in plain clothes?"

"But you don't, somehow, look like a 'tec."

"That's the cunning part of it," he said. "There ain't a better man at making up in all Scotland Yard than Robert Warkins."

"And are you engaged specially to look after this picture?"

"That is my identical business at the present time. I've been waiting outside, but it's a bit parky there, and I don't know as I won't stay in 'ere for a bit. And if anybody comes in whilst I'm here, why——"

He took a neat little revolver from his trousers pocket.

"Well, you don't mind if I say good-night to you?" asked Miss Ballard with a regretful look at the picture. It was hard to have arrived so near to success, and then to have to leave.

"Not at all, my dear. Don't you go and lose your beauty sleep on my account. By-the-bye, is there a new girl come to-day name of Ballard?"

"I rather think there is," said Miss Ballard, "but I haven't met her. I dare-say I shall do sooner or later." Miss Ballard at the door seemed struck with a sudden thought, and took her long white wrap from her neck. "Good night."

"Good night," he said. "Don't make a noise as you go upstairs."

"It's all right, Sergeant; I've got me boots off."

He turned, and, holding up his small bull's-eye lantern looked at the Velasquez and chuckled. Miss Ballard closed the door very quietly, and very softly crept up behind him. The white wrap went round thick and secure over his mouth, and was tied quickly; the revolver taken out of his pocket. The man, astounded, sank back for a moment into an arm-chair.

"Now look here, Sergeant: you just 'ark a—a bit to me."

She covered him with the revolver, and he made vain attempts to speak.

"You attempt to loosen that scarf that's over your mouth or you attempt to get out of that chair until I say 'Go,' and as sure as I'm a living woman you'll never see Scotland Yard again. Understand that."

He looked at her appealingly but did not dare to move. A faint sound of suppressed grumbling came from his lips.

"Less noise there," said Miss Ballard, commandingly. "That's the worst of you detectives. You're all jaw. Get up now and open that window. It isn't easy to see quite how to manage this business, but I'm going to do it. Open the window."

He complied with the order. He also gave a most appealing look to her, and raised his hand to undo the tight, well-tied knot at the back of his head.

"Ah," said Miss Ballard warningly, "would you? You do that again and pop goes this little pistol. Now I'll just talk to you plainly, Sergeant. Sit down in that chair again."

He obeyed reluctantly, with one eye on his revolver, which she held steadily.

"I'll tell you straightforwardly what I'm a-going to do. I'm a-going to pinch this painting and get away with it, whether you like it or not. If you don't like it, you can lump it!"

He smiled, and would have moved his hands again towards the tight knot, only that the revolver jerked threateningly.

"I've got the upper 'and of you now," she said, "and if you was the chiefest inspector ever born in Scotland Yard, you

SHE COVERED HIM WITH A REVOLVER, AND HE MADE VAIN ATTEMPTS TO SPEAK.

shouldn't interfere with me or stop me at the present point. This is serious business for me. Make so much as another move to untie that shawl, and your life won't be worth a bad threepenny bit."

With her left hand Miss Ballard cut the top line of the painting. Released, it slipped down on the floor. As it did so, the door opened behind her, and the muffled man in the chair made a swift rush for the window. The revolver dropped from the hands of the startled Miss Ballard, and went off with a loud report.

"Now, then!" cried Miss Ballard; "you're doing what I told you not to. Why couldn't you keep quiet instead of——"

"You good, brave Ballard!" The voice of her young mistress made Miss

Ballard turn. "You have stopped that dreadful burglar from stealing the beautiful picture. My father will never be able to thank you enough."

She was in her scarlet dressing-gown, and there was a look of mingled amazement and admiration in her eyes.

"What a smart, clever maid you are, Ballard. How did you have the courage to do it?"

"Well," said Miss Ballard modestly, "it had to be done, and I did it."

"But why are you wearing your bonnet?"

"I thought," explained Miss Ballard, "that I might 'ave to chase him."

She went to the open window and looked down. The man had taken off the wrap, and, turning at the corner, he shook his fist at her.

"You silly Juggins," he shouted.

When the household had complimented Miss Ballard to its full and was returning again to rest after the commotion caused by the scare, Sir Benjamin elected to stay in the library for the rest of the night, and thanked his stars that the Velasquez was going away to its new purchaser the next day. Cook relented her harshness towards the new maid, and brought her the letter. Miss Ballard read it—

Dear Martha,—A chum of mine is going to try to get in to-night. His name is Robert Warkins. Do all you can to help him. JIM.

"I 'ope," said Cook graciously, "that we shall get on better than we begun. I 'm a bit 'asty in me temper, but if you 're 'ere for a bit longer I daresay we——"

"I 've had just enough of this shop," said Miss Ballard moodily; "I shall sling my 'ook at the very earliest opportunity."

* * * *

"Captain" Ballard drinks up her tea (which is cold) and takes a lump of sugar, to be munched on her way home to the Rue Auber. She sighs a little regretfully.

"Ah well," she says, pulling her straw bonnet forward, "Glowry be it 's all past and forgot now. There 's a well-known 'ymn commencing——"

I am so afraid "Captain" Ballard is going to sing that I shake hands.

"Sinful days," says "Captain" Ballard as she grasps my hand, "Sinful days, but, my word, they *was* exciting."

Photo by Mayall and Co., Piccadilly.

BARON HIRSCH.

THE ENGLISH ILLUSTRATED MAGAZINE.

BARON HIRSCH.

By ARNOLD WHITE.

THERE was a time, not very long ago, when dead men of mark, especially while their bodies lay unburied, were exempt from attacks in the public Press upon their character and reputation. While Baron Hirsch's body was being conveyed from Vienna to Paris, I read in one journal after another of traits and characteristics derogatory to him which I sincerely believe not only to be untrue, but to libel the character and reputation of a great man. Thus in the *Speaker* I read that, "despite his prodigious wealth and his vast and almost fabulous charities, the Baron was hardly a popular person. He was inclined to be aggressive in his manner, especially towards those whom he could browbeat with impunity; and there was always a suspicion of the purse-proud upstart in his manner." On matters of taste it is notoriously idle to dispute, and I have no doubt that the eminent writer of the paragraph I have quoted believed what he was writing to be as true as I know it to be the reverse. The *Spectator*, again, before Baron Hirsch's body had been laid in the ground, printed a highly philosophical article, in which he was compared to Fouquet and to the Roman patrician who plundered provinces in order that he might feed some thousands of Roman electors, and who doomed one thousand two hundred slaves to die in the arena in order that he might become popular, feeding the while on peacocks' tongues and fish brought by relays of couriers. So far from according to Baron Hirsch credit for idealising the employment of vast means, or for having diffused more happiness and lightened more sorrow than most men of his time, in a world where oppression of men and trouble of circumstances prevailed, the *Spectator*, which is generally fair and always intends to be so, implies that Crassus and Lucullus are the proper people with whom to compare the late Baron, and in whose company his memory will descend to posterity; and that the sum of his charity was not equal to one year's revenue of the charities of London. In addition to these indictments, others were spread broadcast to the effect that Baron Hirsch had made his vast fortune by swindling the Sultan in making crooked railways for the unspeakable Turk.

Circumstances have led to my forming a wholly different estimate of Baron Hirsch's character from that formed by the eminent journalistic authorities to whom I have referred; and I do not think my opportunities of forming a judgment have been inferior to theirs. Baron Hirsch was not only very good to me, but there grew up a friendship between us which, at all events on my side, was founded on respect for his character. Probably there are hundreds of people in England who are better able than I am to vindicate his memory from slander and allegations of misdeeds of which he has not been proved to be guilty. But, at all events, while the allegations are freshly in circulation is the appropriate time for contradicting them.

The occasion on which I first met Baron Hirsch alone and for serious conversation was in 1889. The subject of our talk was the prevention of the immigration of destitute aliens into this country. I felt then very strongly, feel now, and always shall believe, that the peculiar system of treating the Jews adopted by the Russian Government is a grave wrong to England, because the most destitute members of the community necessarily gravitate to England, as being the only country that will receive them. This view, wherever it is held, infallibly earns for its holder the imputation of being an anti-Semite, and to be anti-Semitic in opinions is not the most effectual method of obtaining or keeping the friendship of members of the Jewish community. In my first conversation with Baron Hirsch on the subject at the Albemarle Hotel, I remember expecting the veiled suspicion and hostility of tone to be anticipated from any prominent member of the Hebrew faith when discussing the best methods of dealing with the evil. He listened to what I had to say

with patience and attention, but after an hour and a half, finding that I had apparently made no impression upon him, I rose to leave. On doing so, he began to speak of his plans for making a great Jewish State, and thus diverting the stream from England to the new Palestine. The sums he named were so vast and the figures he dealt with so completely outside the range of practical life, that I listened to him as to an amiable visionary, and I finally parted with him on that occasion under the firm conviction that he was a dreamer of dreams, and that he had been amusing himself at my expense with telling stories. I also believed that he considered me a crank, and that the subject which had brought us together would never be resumed.

Shortly afterwards I received an invitation from him to visit him in Paris in order to resume our conversation. He asked me to go to Russia for him to report on the condition of the poor Jews, and to see what steps were practicable in order to obtain some relaxation of the passport regulations and the arrears of taxation which are among the most fruitful sources of distress to the Russian Jews. Before accepting the commission I made every possible investigation about Baron Hirsch's previous business career, and so far as my inquiries went—and I state the result for what it is worth—there is no evidence whatever of any dishonourable conduct in reference to the Turkish contracts. It was characteristic of the man that when I asked him about the Turkish contracts, mentioning the rumours I had heard, he was not offended, but told me the following facts. So far from having made an "enormous fortune" or "millions of money" out of the Turk, he made £800,000, which he ascribed to the close attention to detail given by himself and to the employment of German engineers. As an Austrian Brassey, Baron Hirsch made a great but not a vast fortune on railway contracts; but the bulk of his gains came from other sources, to which public attention has not been called.

After my first visit to Russia for the Baron in 1890 I saw a good deal of him at his various homes, as well as at Homburg and Carlsbad. It is sheer nonsense to talk of his hospitalities being as "lavish as those of Monte Cristo." The house at Newmarket is small, and does not lend itself to Monte Cristo entertainments. The Baron scarcely entertained at Bath House. In Paris his hospitality was undoubtedly magnificent, but it was by no means more extraordinary than that of other people of great wealth. At Eichhorn and St. Johann the "shoots" were organised on a large scale, and the arrangements were stately. But most people know even more splendid entertainers than Baron Hirsch, who will go to their graves without any accusations as to being "ostentatious" or "purse-proud upstarts." Such hosts are not common, but there was nothing about Baron Hirsch's entertainments which was more Monte Cristo-ish than those of half-a-dozen living men whose wealth does not approach his. The fact of entertaining in a princely fashion attracts so much attention that the less seductive and less known side of Baron Hirsch's life, although infinitely more important, is apt to be obscured behind the glitter of his banquets and the recreations of his leisure.

With him, as a rule, the day's pleasure began only after luncheon. From six a.m. in summer he would work unceasingly at his charities, and especially at the Russian scheme. I have beside me as I write three large portfolios of his letters, which give evidence of a virile and sustained sympathy with the suffering and oppressed, which would be wholly beyond the capacity of a mere pleasure-seeker He gave a great deal more than his money. He gave his time, attention, and intellect to the minute study of the problems he attacked for the benefit of his co-religionists and others. If Baron Hirsch was no saint—and he was a far more delightful companion than some saints one has met—he was certainly no mere man of fashion. In fact, the roses and raptures with which his wealth and hospitality surrounded him always seemed to me to cover a deep and sterling character of which the gay world knew very little. If he was a little too fond of playing the young man, it was only in the hours of relaxation. How many of his censors and traducers, who sneer at what they do not understand, have devoted several hours a day all the year round over a series of years to remedying the wrongs and lightening the burdens of men, women, and children, whom they have never seen, and to whom they themselves have been but names?

On four occasions I visited Russia for him, and visited every part of the country where Jews were to be found. I was not the medium of any of his charities in Russia, and I made no promises to any of his co-religionists on his behalf. In what I am about to say, therefore, I cannot be

suspected of overstating the real feeling of the poorer Jews of Russia, of whom there are about five and a quarter millions. When it became generally known among them that Baron Hirsch was attempting to relieve their most urgent necessities, and was himself devoting time and effort to their circumstances, a ray of sunlight fell upon a very sad and depressed population. There was not a poor Jewish home in Russia where the name of Hirsch did not receive a daily blessing—not for what he had given or for what he was about to give, but because he had stretched out a hand to them in their misery, because they no longer felt themselves forsaken, and because a touch of kindness from an unseen hand gave them fresh courage, new resolution, and a new hope. Baron Hirsch may have been as hard and as cynical with well-to-do people as he is represented to be, but that he had a sustained feeling of compassion for the submerged nine-tenths of the Jews of Russia and Poland, a hundred conversations I have had with him on the subject can testify.

That he was a many-sided man everyone is aware. These few words are written simply with the desire to vindicate him, now that he is dead, from the unjust reflections of people who did not know his best side. I do not presume to write an appreciation of his character as a whole. But he had some fine qualities besides philanthropy. He was a man of rare courage, which on one occasion, at all events, he pushed to the verge of folly. When he was quite a young man—he himself told me the incident was true—he was in a town in Turkey where the cholera was raging. Some Austrian officers were there, and a conversation sprang up about courage. A bet was proposed and accepted by Hirsch that he would not pass the night on a bed with the corpse of a man who had died of the cholera, one condition being that the layer of the odds was to stand in the doorway all night and see that the wager was fairly won. This was done. Hirsch passed the night with the body, and won the bet. Next morning, as he and his friend were leaving the house, they encountered a funeral at the corner of the street, at which there was a block. The hastily made coffin, which was borne on men's shoulders, by some mischance fell, and in falling the body, that of a beautiful girl, rolled out of the shell into the street. The girl was the sister of the Austrian officer, who did not even know she was ill. The shock was so great to the brother that he fell to the ground, was immediately seized with cholera, and himself was a corpse within forty-eight hours.

With regard to the current allegations as to Baron Hirsch being an "upstart," it is a fact that he was born rich. Except that he became richer as his life developed and expanded, there was no sudden leap from poverty to riches which could turn his head. In his youth he had a theological tutor, who presented to the future millionaire so vivid a contrast between precept and practice that for ever afterwards the dogmas of creed ceased to exercise any effect on his mind. There had been an idea of Hirsch becoming a Catholic; but he preferred to remain among his own people. As a matter of fact, however, he told me that he had never entered a synagogue for worship. He had a strong vision and unerring eye for humbug and pretence of every kind, and appreciated nothing more than being told the truth with quiet determination. I remember being warned that when I was in Russia he would interfere with me, and would attempt to engineer the negotiations in which I was engaged from Bohemia or the Riviera. He showed signs on a critical occasion of wishing to do the business himself, while, being at a distance, he could not possibly grasp all its bearings and appreciate all the currents and forces that affected the situation on the spot. When I begged him either to leave me alone or to send out someone in whom he could repose full confidence, he surrendered the point at once, and on the day before the Derby of 1892 the late Czar signed the ukaz under which the Jewish Colonisation Association operates in Russia. To obtain this not a rouble had been spent in "conciliation," and the coveted signature had been obtained by straightforward negotiations, in the promotion of which there can now be no indiscretion in saying that his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales gave invaluable aid. It is only fair to the memory of the late Sir Robert Morier, late Ambassador to the Czar, that to him should be ascribed all the credit for final success. His efforts on behalf of the Jews were indefatigable.

Those who judge Baron Hirsch by the aspect he bore in society must necessarily misjudge him; for to understand the keynote to his life one must have lost, or be about to lose, an only son.

The Queen of Portugal's Lover.

by Percy Andreæ.

"INTRIGUE is a contemptible weapon under all circumstances, and more often than not wounds the hand that wields it instead of him against whom it is directed," said Sir John gravely, as we sat at his hospitable board over our wine—the usual company of twelve—on one of his famous supper evenings.

The remark was addressed to a rather youthful politician, who had just entertained the company by relating with evident gusto the newest achievement of a certain well-known diplomat, who shall be nameless, but whose reputation for scrupulousness was not of the best. Old Sir John's sense of honour was exceedingly keen, and though a tougher antagonist than he, or one more capable of leading his opponent by the nose, never breathed, he would as soon have thought of picking a pocket among the crowd in the Prater as of stooping to methods which transgressed the rules of fair play.

The conversation now turned generally upon the question as to whether it was possible, in matters political or diplomatic, to avoid entirely the use of the weapon so forcibly denounced by our host, some maintaining that intrigue could only be successfully foiled by counter-intrigue, while others took a contrary view.

Sir John stoutly held to the opinion he had already expressed.

"That intrigue can only be thwarted by intrigue," he said, "is a maxim which flies in the face of actual fact. My own experience goes to show that, on the contrary, intrigue in by far the majority of cases defeats its own ends, and that without the intervention of any third party. One of the most successful intrigues I was ever a witness of, for instance, failed for no other reason than because it proved too successful. You may think this a paradox," he added, turning to the gentleman whose anecdote had started the topic, "but it is true, nevertheless. If it interests you, I will give you the facts—that is to say," he said, checking himself suddenly, as if he had promised more than he had intended, "on some occasion more suitable than the present."

"Come, Sir John," cried one of the company, a Prince of the House of Coburg, "this is hardly fair. A good story requires no special occasion. Let us all have the benefit of it."

"Sir," said old Sir John, "I am perfectly willing to give the story, only I beg to warn your Highness that it concerns a member of your own illustrious house."

"All the more interesting to me," replied the Prince. "Who is it?"

"Dom Pedro V., King of Portugal," Sir John answered.

"Ah, the husband of the beautiful Stephanie of Hohenzollern," exclaimed the Prince. "Well, he has been gathered to his fathers these twenty years. Modern piety for the memory of one's ancestors rarely outlasts even one-thirtieth part of that time. By-the-way, there are some curious histories told in relation to that marriage."

"Perhaps my story will enlighten your Highness as to which is the true one," Sir John remarked, as he passed the decanters, and leaned back in his chair in the comfortable attitude he always assumed when the anecdotal spirit came over him.

We refilled our glasses, and sat expectant.

As your Highness truly remarked (Sir John began), there are several versions of the circumstances attending the marriage of Dom Pedro. But the real truth was no secret to those who lived at the Court of Lisbon at the time. Dom Pedro, in fact, married against his will. Of an ardent and generous temperament, he had in his early days contracted one of those violent youthful passions which, when unopposed, as a rule quickly die of their own excessive heat. Unfortunately, in the young King's case, this passion not only met with strong opposition on the part of his father, the titular King, but the opposition took a form which was least likely to secure the end in view, and which was deeply resented by Dom Pedro. The object of his affections, a certain lady who had played a not altogether creditable part at his mother's Court, was subjected to a cruel species of persecution, which culminated in her sudden mysterious disappearance from Lisbon. Some say she died, others that she was imprisoned; but the most probable report is that she was forced to take the veil. At all events, this latter was the young King's belief, and when, a few months later, yielding to the urgent desire of his father and the strong pressure put upon him by the Cortes, his Majesty reluctantly consented to accept as his consort the beautiful and accomplished Princess Stephanie, he did so with the memory of his wronged love still keen within him, and with the firm determination that no other love should take its place in his heart.

The marriage, at which I had the honour to be present, for I was then attached as first secretary to the British Embassy in Lisbon, was a most brilliant affair. But the young Queen, who held her first Court at Lisbon three weeks later, was as different from the sweet bride we had seen standing, all radiant with pride and happiness, at her future husband's side before the altar as can well be imagined. The change these three weeks had wrought in her was astonishing, and its cause a subject of general speculation.

Yet the truth cannot have been difficult to guess, even by those who, like myself, had no other material from which to form their judgment than the meagre facts which were in everybody's knowledge. In short, there is no doubt that the young Queen had learned that in bestowing her hand upon Dom Pedro she had gained a royal crown, but not a husband's love. In what manner and through what channels the revelation had been made to her can only be conjectured. Some assert, and upon plausible authority, that a letter from Dom Pedro to a friend of his youth, in which he had made announcement of his projected alliance with the beautiful Princess of Hohenzollern in terms of great bitterness, was played into the Queen's hands within a few hours of the completion of the marriage ceremony; from what motives, however, if not from those of pure spite and malice, I will not attempt to determine. Perhaps in the light of after-events certain conclusions on this score may be justifiable, which, if correct, would tend to prove that the intrigue I am about to relate was but the sequel of an earlier one, in which the same parties were concerned.

However that may be—and the exact truth will probably never be known—it is certain that on the day of her wedding the proud and sensitive nature of Queen Stephanie received a rude and terrible shock, and within a short time it was obvious to everyone who moved at the Court of Lisbon that a barrier existed between King Pedro and his Queen which virtually rendered their marriage null and void.

Not that his Majesty treated the partner of his throne with coldness or neglect. On the contrary, his manner towards her was that of the profoundest respect. Queen Stephanie was a woman of considerable intellect, whose accomplishments were on a par with her beauty. To many, and particularly to those who had not

known her before her marriage, she may have appeared cold and haughty; and there is no denying that towards her husband her manner was uniformly cold and distant. Yet in her acts, both public and private, she gave proofs of great warmth of heart, and though she took no part in her husband's private life and pursuits, she shared his duties to the full. Nay, more, in affairs of state and public import the King gradually grew accustomed to turn to her as a matter of course, and it was not long before it became evident that the influence of the Queen upon his Majesty's views and judgment was a power to be reckoned with.

An inconvenient power it was, too, to a certain faction at Court, who saw the hold they had hitherto possessed upon the young King's mind gradually slipping from them, and their very existence threatened by this new influence, which had so unexpectedly sprung up to oppose them.

I need not dwell upon the political differences which divided the Court of Lisbon at the period in question; the less, indeed, that the enemies who arose around the young Queen were not caused by the fact that her Majesty sided with an opposite party, or pursued a policy contrary to their own. Queen Stephanie's sin was that she held with no party at all, and that her influence upon Dom Pedro was exerted towards rendering him equally independent of the more or less interested views and desires of those around him. Thus, while she made bitter enemies of the men who had hitherto ruled him, she gained no friends in those who had not, and it was the opinion of all unbiassed onlookers that her Majesty's position would prove in the long run untenable.

The anomalous circumstances attending the royal marriage were an open secret. Everyone knew that Stephanie of Hohenzollern was Dom Pedro's Queen, but not his wife. Some blamed him, some blamed her, but one and all felt the relations between the royal couple to be undesirable and precarious. The King, it was known, had taken steps to conciliate the affections of his proud consort, and to remove the unfortunate impression created upon her mind by a disclosure the nature of which can scarcely have been less painful to him than it was to her. But Stephanie remained obdurate.

Dom Pedro was of a jealous disposition, and in spite of the immense respect which he openly paid his wife, there were indications, which grew more marked from day to day, showing that he kept a watchful eye upon her movements, and regarded those of his own sex for whom her Majesty showed the slightest predilection with dislike and suspicion. It is scarcely necessary to point out that this state of affairs opened up possibilities for intrigue which were eagerly seized upon by the Queen's unscrupulous and powerful enemies.

Curiously enough, the first intimation that there was an intrigue on foot to poison the King's mind against the Queen and induce him to divorce her came to me, about three months after the royal nuptials, from his Majesty himself.

I had come to Lisbon from Berlin, where, during my six years' diplomatic service, King Frederick William IV., one of the most accomplished men I have ever known, had been pleased to regard me with a certain amount of favour. Knowing this, and believing me to possess an intimate acquaintance with the character and views of the Prussian monarch, Dom Pedro sounded me on the subject in a manner that left me little doubt as to the true cause of his curiosity. He was apparently anxious to learn what attitude Frederick William IV., as a Hohenzollern, would assume in the event of a dissolution of his marriage with Queen Stephanie.

This question, however, as I had the duty of informing his Majesty on a subsequent occasion, was one of deeper interest to my own Government than to the Prussian Sovereign, for reasons into which I need not enter here. My report of this curious conversation with Dom Pedro was in due course forwarded to London by the British Ambassador, with the result that I was instructed, if the King ever approached me on the subject again, to give his Majesty clearly to understand that England would view the step he was apparently contemplating with serious disapproval.

The opportunity for carrying out these instructions, as I have indicated, was not long in coming, for his Majesty broached the topic to me once more a few weeks later. To my surprise, however, he seemed by no means displeased at what he heard from me, and, although not disavowing the intentions he was credited with, declared to me most emphatically that, if his marriage should ever be dissolved, it would only be with the free consent and at the express desire of the Queen herself.

I had, of course, no means of learning her Majesty's views on the subject. But, judging from the fact that shortly afterwards the [illegible] party," as the Queen's

adversaries were now called, found it expedient to resort to other tactics in order to attain their end, it may be inferred that her Majesty was content to let things rest as they were, and certainly took no initiative in the matter herself.

It now began to be whispered at Court that the Queen had bestowed her favour upon a certain personage filling a responsible position in the immediate service of the King. Scandalous tongues soon asserted boldly that she had a lover, and that the King was being shamefully deceived. For my part, I treated these rumours as I thought they deserved to be treated—with incredulity and contempt. But I was only too alive, nevertheless, to the possible effect they might have upon Dom Pedro, whose ears, I knew, they were intended ultimately to reach.

My uneasiness, I confess, was increased by the fact, to which it was impossible to shut my eyes, that a decided change had come over the young Queen within the last two months. The air of sadness and melancholy which had characterised her ever since her wedding-day had gradually vanished, making way for a look of quiet happiness, for which it seemed difficult to find an ordinary explanation. This change was the more marked by contrast with her manner towards Dom Pedro himself, which of late had grown ominously frigid and disdainful. She exhibited at times an irritability towards the King which made those who knew his character and were well disposed towards the Queen tremble for the consequences. But it must be owned that his Majesty, for a time at least, bore it all with exemplary patience. His nature, though passionate and even resentful, was at bottom generous and chivalrous, and he seemed conscious that his wife had some excuse for the feelings of anger she was at so little pains to conceal from him.

I possessed exceptional opportunities for observing these things, for I had the honour of being frequently invited to join her Majesty's evening circle, which Dom Pedro never failed to attend. I owed this distinction to no personal merit of my own. Queen Stephanie was a passionate lover of whist, and my proficiency in that most royal of games procured me a favour which I should otherwise doubtless have never enjoyed.

It was upon one of these evenings that I witnessed a scene between Dom Pedro and his Queen which showed only too clearly that affairs between them were assuming a threatening aspect. The King was not a scientific whist-player, but he played a fairly good hand, and, indeed, never better than when he had the Queen for a partner, which was the case on this particular occasion, the young Conde d'Aguiar and myself being partners against their Majesties. It was our second rubber that evening, the first having been played by Dom Pedro and myself against the Queen and the Conde. The latter party had proved victorious, a fact which her Majesty was pleased to ascribe to her partner's sympathetic play. This was indeed true, for the Conde was an excellent, though somewhat daring, hand at whist, whereas the King was not only a timid and uncertain player, but an unreliable and often inattentive partner.

I mention these details because they have a certain significance in the light of what occurred. During the second rubber, her Majesty, who usually bore her losses with perfect equanimity, gave frequent signs of impatience and annoyance at the slips made by the King, which the latter received outwardly with rare good humour. Yet it did not escape me that once or twice an angry light gleamed in his eye, and that he darted a look of unmistakable displeasure—not across the table at the Queen herself, but at the opponent seated on his left, who was the Conde d'Aguiar. Had I dared, I would have played to lose, for I had an instinctive apprehension that something was brewing. But I knew too well that the Queen would have seen through the artifice at once, and would have resented it. So the game took its ordinary course, and resulted, as was inevitable, in an ignominious defeat of the royal couple.

Their cards had been throughout favourable, and doubtless had either the Conde or myself been the Queen's partner, the result of the rubber would have been quite the reverse. Her Majesty felt this, and gave expression to the feeling so unreservedly and with so much petulance that I glanced with an involuntary sense of dismay at the King, fearful of the effect that this ill-advised display of vexation might produce upon him. For an instant I fancied he would fly into a violent passion. But he controlled himself with an evident effort, and rising quietly, addressed the Queen in the following words—

"I fear, Madam, I have not the good fortune to be as sympathetic a partner to your Majesty as the Conde d'Aguiar. But, if the Conde plays a bold game, I play a safer one, and may in the end prove a

more dangerous adversary than he at present imagines."

With these words, which were heard by the bystanders, he bowed in his ordinary courtly fashion to the Queen, and left the table. Her Majesty flushed a little, but rather, it seemed to me, in annoyance at her own lapse of dignity, which she now realised, than at the covert insinuation the King's words conveyed. The Conde, however, turned pale and looked intensely foolish.

As for myself, I have witnessed many scenes far more dramatic and exciting than this one, yet none that affected me more disagreeably. The name of the Conde d'Aguiar, one of the handsomest men at the Portuguese Court, had latterly been whispered in connection with that of the Queen, but in so vague a manner that I had attached no importance to the fact. The Conde was a general favourite with the ladies, and belonged, I knew, to the small circle of those who professed themselves the friends of the Queen. Her Majesty was particularly partial to him—indeed, she was partial to anyone who excelled in the game she loved so passionately, as witness the favour I myself enjoyed—but she had always taken so little pains to conceal the fact that the idea of any secret understanding existing between them seemed out of the question.

HE CONTROLLED HIMSELF WITH AN EVIDENT EFFORT, AND, RISING QUIETLY, ADDRESSED THE QUEEN.

Even now, in spite of this significant little episode, I was loth to believe that a woman of Queen Stephanie's undoubted gifts could have become attracted to a

creature of the Conde's stamp. He was vain and boastful in the extreme, and, beyond his skill at cards and a certain facility for composing sentimental love-rhymes, which, coupled with his good looks, turned the heads of silly women, he possessed no gift or talent of any kind, and, in point of pure intellect, was as undistinguishable from his own valet as one pea from another.

A very few days after the event I have just described, however, the rumours concerning the Queen's alleged liaison with the Conde d'Aguiar assumed more definite proportions. Heedless of the warning conveyed to him by the King, or possibly, as I thought, deceived by the calm and unimpassioned manner in which it was delivered, the Conde made no attempt to conceal his folly. He was known to have indiscreetly vaunted his intimacy with the Queen to a few boon companions, but he now made an open boast of the King's jealousy, insinuating darkly that it was not altogether without cause.

Poor Queen Stephanie! Could she possibly have yielded her fair fame into the hands of this wretched puppy? I still refused to believe it, though there was no mistaking the fact that the King was seriously jealous; whether, however, of the Conde d'Aguiar or of someone else it was difficult to determine. I inclined to the belief that it was someone else.

During the following weeks the Queen's demeanour towards her husband grew, if possible, more determinedly disdainful than before. As if blind to the danger she was incurring, she treated him with a petulant irritability which amazed those who witnessed it, and even went out of her way to affront and displease him. It seemed almost as if she were being goaded on by some secret power to try the King's patience to the utmost limits, and it occurred to me that it might be she herself who was aiming at a dissolution of the marriage which had resulted so unhappily. In short, the situation was most puzzling. The very atmosphere at the Court of Lisbon seemed heavy with intrigue and plottings.

To me, the greatest mystery of all was the King himself. That he knew of the scandalous rumours that were occupying all minds about him was unquestionable. Yet he apparently took no steps to ascertain their truth or refute them. No one who watched him could doubt that he was suffering from the worst pangs of jealousy; yet his manner towards the Queen remained, as heretofore, chivalrous and respectful — ay, even deferential. Was he, then, as some said, merely biding his time, and meanwhile gradually drawing the net closer, in order to make the more sure of his prey?

I was soon to be enlightened on the subject, and in a manner I had least expected.

The two most determined enemies of the Queen were the Marquis de Albuquerque, formerly the governor of his Majesty, over whom he had gained considerable influence, and the King's spiritual adviser, a Churchman of the extreme type, who from the outset had set his face against the royal marriage. The former of these two had, I knew, been the first to poison the King's mind against the Conde d'Aguiar, a matter of no great difficulty; for, as I have stated, the Conde's vanity was such as to render him, in the hands of a man like the Marquis de Albuquerque, an easy instrument wherewith to accomplish his own downfall. The Marquis, who, by what means I have never learned, had obtained knowledge of the conversations that had passed between the King and me with reference to the contemplated dissolution of his marriage, made various attempts to ascertain from me the nature of his Majesty's inquiries; but I was not inclined to satisfy his curiosity on the subject. I only ventured to remark, as he himself made no secret of the designs that were actuating him and his friends, that I believed the King had no desire to divorce his wife, and would not thank those who made it their business to urge him to such a step.

The Marquis smiled a sardonic smile.

"If they fail," he said, "no doubt you may prove to be right. But they will not fail, my friend."

I shrugged my shoulders, perhaps a little contemptuously, for I felt a strong desire to kick this dark-eyed schemer, who I knew was pitting all his vile arts and his vast influence against a defenceless and, I believed, unsuspecting woman, whom he had sworn to ruin.

He noticed the gesture and flared up.

"You doubt it?" he exclaimed, turning upon me with a look of malice. "I do not pretend to know what importance men in your country attach to the fidelity of their wives, but we Portuguese have our own notions on the subject, and I am content to abide by them."

"We Englishmen," I replied, "believe in the fidelity of our own and other people's wives until we see proofs to the contrary. If we differ in this respect from your countrymen, Marquis, you will pardon me

for saying that I consider Dom Pedro more of an Englishman than a Portuguese."

"And what," the Marquis answered, "if I hold in my possession at this very moment such proofs of the Queen's faithlessness to her husband as would satisfy even an English mind?"

"In that case," I replied, "I think it is a pity that you do not produce them to his Majesty, who is the chief person concerned."

"All in good time, my friend," the Marquis retorted. "*Che va piano va sano*, as the Italians say. The day will come. We will then compare notes again."

This conversation left a most disagreeable impression upon me. Never in my life had I felt more tempted to interfere in a matter which did not concern me than I felt now. The Queen, I saw more clearly from day to day, was either unaccountably blind to what was passing around her, or she was pursuing some deliberate plan of her own, which made her regard her enemies' machinations with indifference. I would have given a good deal to be able to convey a warning to her. But, even had it been possible for me to do so, the step was too precarious a one to be seriously thought of, and I desisted, fortunately for me and all parties concerned.

The Marquis de Albuquerque had not spoken in a spirit of mere boastfulness when he assured me that he held the Queen's fate in his hands. The final blow, which had been carefully planned and prepared, fell within a few days of the conversation I have alluded to.

The first I heard was that proofs of a clandestine correspondence between the Queen and her paramour had fallen into the hands of the "divorce party," and had been brought to the King's knowledge through his confessor, the Padre Antonio. The palace was said to be in a state of intense excitement, and the consternation among the Queen's friends was profound. The Conde d'Aguiar, it appeared, had received timely warning of the impending catastrophe, and had sought safety in flight. What the Queen's fate would be no one could foretell.

In the midst of the general excitement caused by this news I received towards evening, to my intense surprise, a summons to the palace, where I was informed that the King wished to see me. On entering the royal cabinet I found his Majesty, for the first time since I had known him, in a state of uncontrollable agitation. He received me almost brusquely, and plunged at once, without further preamble, into the matter that was engaging everyone's attention.

"You have heard the news, of course?" he said. "These devils have taken care that it should be in everyone's mouth before it came to my ears."

He spoke with concentrated passion, and I was so taken aback at this extraordinary display of confidence towards me, a foreigner and comparative stranger, that I stood silent, not knowing what to answer.

The King noticed my surprise, and continued more calmly—

"You wonder that I have sent for you," he said. "The reason is simple. Your Government, upon whose friendship and support I rest the very highest value, has, as you have the best reason for knowing, been pleased to convey to me in very plain terms the views with which it would regard a certain contingency. I am in no way prepared to admit on principle the right even of a Power to which I am under such deep and lasting obligations of friendship and gratitude as I am to your country, to dictate to me in matters touching my domestic happiness; but, since the contingency in question is now, unfortunately, on the point of arising, I am determined to prove to the satisfaction of those concerned that it is none of my making, but that I have been driven to it by circumstances which no honourable man, be he a king or a pedlar, can disregard. I trust that you understand me. If your reputation does not belie you, you possess exceptional powers of judgment and penetration. You shall have an opportunity of exercising both before you leave me."

In my confusion at this unexpected communication, which was anything but pleasing to me, I knew of nothing better to do than to express my firm conviction that his Majesty was the victim of a vile conspiracy and that the Queen was as innocent of the infamy ascribed to her as a new-born babe.

The King's eyes flashed upon me with a look of momentary suspicion. Then he strode impulsively towards a small escritoire standing a few feet from the middle bow-window of the apartment, and drawing from it a small bundle of papers, selected one and handed it to me.

"Read this," he said, "and tell me if the woman who secretly treasures documents such as this, concealing her possession of them from her own husband, can be as innocent as you would have me suppose."

I took the paper hesitatingly and read its contents. They were in verse—and verse of no ordinary kind. That they were addressed to the Queen there could be no doubt, for, apart from other evidence, they contained references to Dom Pedro himself and the rôle he played in the Queen's life which denoted an intimate knowledge on the part of the writer of the unhappy circumstances attending the royal match.

Yet there was a delicacy displayed in these allusions which struck me very forcibly, and momentarily reawakened the suspicion I had once entertained that the Queen might be a less passive factor in the drama that was playing than anyone supposed. There was, moreover, a peculiarity in the handwriting of the verses which served to strengthen this suspicion.

"Sire," I said, as I handed back the document, "I am greatly mistaken if these verses were not penned by a female hand."

"Precisely," his Majesty replied. "The writing is that of the Queen herself."

I had not been prepared for this, and the answer took me by surprise.

"Then who is to prove," I exclaimed with eager haste, "that it was not also her Majesty herself who composed these verses?"

"Your zeal outruns your judgment, Sir," the King said coldly. "The original, from which these particular verses were copied, happens to have passed into my possession before the copy was made."

"In that case, Sire," I said, "her Majesty must have written them——"

"From memory—quite so, as certain omissions and errors in the copy clearly prove," the King said. "It is not every poet," he added bitterly, "who can boast of so studious and appreciative a reader."

"Sire," I remarked, clinging obstinately to my idea, "I have known poets whose love of their own compositions has enabled them to accomplish far more marvellous feats of memory than this."

He turned upon me with a gesture of impatience.

"This is foolish," he said curtly. "The Queen may have gained a fair knowledge of the Portuguese language, but not the mastery that would have enabled her to produce such verse as this."

The argument was unanswerable, and I felt that I had made a mistake. Yet if it was certain that the Queen had had no hand in the composition of these verses, it was equally certain to my mind that they could not have originated in the vapid brain of the Conde d'Aguiar. Emboldened by the strange confidence the King had bestowed upon me, I ventured to intimate this conviction to his Majesty.

He curled his lip disdainfully.

"The Conde is a fool," he said. "If I believed——"

He broke off abruptly, took a few paces across the chamber, and then resumed.

"These meddling idiots think I have been blind to what has been passing before my very eyes. I tell you I possessed knowledge of these things before they dreamed of their existence. But since they have drawn the eyes of the world to that which I had hoped would always remain concealed from them, by the God above us, whatever the consequences may be, they shall pay for them."

I had scarcely had time fully to grasp the meaning of these passionately spoken words, when the aide-de-camp on duty entered and announced the arrival of the Marquis de Albuquerque and the Padre Antonio, the King's confessor. A moment later these two worthies were ushered into the royal presence.

They entered, as it seemed to me, with a well-feigned mien of sad concern; but, when their eyes fell upon me, I observed an expression of blank astonishment settle upon their faces. The King, however, deigned to offer no explanation for my presence in the royal cabinet, but, inclining his head stiffly in response to their profound obeisance, turned brusquely away from them and struck a silver bell placed upon his writing-table.

A chamberlain entered, received a signal from the King, and retired again.

His Majesty then turned once more to the two gentlemen and eyed them coldly.

"The Queen waits to receive us, Senhores," he said, motioning with his hand towards the door through which the chamberlain had withdrawn. "Let us go."

At these words, the two men's countenances fell perceptibly. It was evident they had expected to meet with a different reception.

"But surely, Sire," the Marquis stammered, "it would be advisable for your Majesty first to confer——"

"I know of nothing that I desire to hear from you, Sir, unless it be in the Queen's presence," the King interrupted him haughtily. "I do not love these secret conferences, Senhor Marquis. What the King does shall be done openly. But for you and your machinations, this matter had rested between the Queen and myself. You have forced my hand. But I would have you know—ay, both of you"—he added,

eyeing the Padre wrathfully, "that there is but one person on this earth who can incriminate the Queen of Portugal—it is her Majesty herself. Nay, no further words. You have heard me—let us go!"

He advanced quickly to the door, and bidding me by a sign follow with the two others, passed through into the corridor leading to the Queen's private apartments.

I hardly know what feeling was uppermost in me—surprise or dismay. I detest scenes of all kinds, but the idea of having to become an unwilling spectator of a domestic scene like the one I now saw in prospect was unpalatable to me in the extreme. Yet I had no option, and I followed the King in silence.

I noticed that the Marquis and his companion exchanged uneasy glances as we traversed the quiet corridor behind the King. But they had evidently been awed by their sovereign's tone and manner, and made no further attempt to alter the course of events, which was apparently not quite in accordance with their plans.

Arrived at her Majesty's apartments, we were conducted by a gentleman-in-waiting, who was in readiness to receive us, through an antechamber into the small cabinet, which was usually occupied by the Queen, and in which I had on more than one occasion had the honour of receiving audience of her Majesty.

The Queen was alone, standing in the embrasure of the window, pale and expectant. A glance at her face, as I entered, the last of the four, told me that she either knew or guessed the object of this strange visit. But its expression was one of resolute determination rather than of fear or apprehension, and once more the idea crossed my mind that the soul of all this intrigue, which was now coming to a head, was no one else but Queen Stephanie herself.

I was soon to learn my grievous error.

In a quiet, measured voice, Dom Pedro, after formally presenting us to the Queen, addressed her Majesty as follows—

"Madam," he said, "it has transpired that there is a certain personage at my Court who for some considerable time past has had the audacity to pay his passionate addresses to your Majesty. Animated, no doubt, by a touching, though mistaken, sense of compassion, your Majesty has hitherto seen fit to shield this daring offender against the Queen's honour and fair fame. The time has now come, however, when, to avoid consequences perhaps even more distressing to your Majesty than the condign punishment of this arch-traitor to his sovereign, such reticence must cease. It is for the purpose, then, of learning from your own lips, Madam, the name of this personage that your Majesty now sees us here!"

There was a moment during the progress of the King's speech, which sounded to me strangely studied and deliberate, when I thought her Majesty's self-possession was about to forsake her. But the sarcastic tone of the last words seemed to act like a tonic upon her, and she flashed upon the speaker one of those angry, resentful looks with which, in her irritable moods, I had of late so frequently seen her regard him.

To me, the only really impartial spectator of this singular scene, it became evident that the relations between these two royal partners were approaching their supreme crisis, and that for good or for evil the struggle in which they had so long been contending would be finally decided.

It was fully thirty seconds before the Queen replied. When she spoke at last it was in a clear, determined voice, without a vestige of hesitation or embarrassment.

"Your considerateness, Sire, amazes me," she said. "But since I am credited with so much compassion and kind-heartedness, I prefer to maintain my reputation; which," she added, in a tone of cutting irony, "is the more easy of accomplishment that I am not in possession of the knowledge your Majesty is desirous of acquiring."

A momentary gleam of anger lighted up the King's eye.

"Then we are to understand, Madam," he exclaimed, "that your Majesty had other motives than those I have suggested for concealing the fact of this correspondence from him whose right it was to hear of it?"

"I had no reason to suppose," the Queen replied coldly, "that the fact of this correspondence, as you are pleased to call it, would awaken any interest in your Majesty."

"Not even so much interest," the King said, advancing a step nearer to her and lowering his voice ominously, "as induced your Majesty to copy some of these passionate effusions from an unknown quarter with your own hand, and treasure them as one treasures a possession too sacred to be gazed upon by other eyes?"

As he spoke he drew from his breast-pocket the verses he had shown to me in his cabinet, and held them up before the Queen's eyes.

I saw her wince and turn pale as she

recognised them; but what impressed me more strangely still were the unmistakable signs of surprise which the sight of this document in the Queen's own handwriting elicited from the two men to whom I had supposed its possession on the part of Dom Pedro was due. Obviously its existence came as a complete revelation to them, and, having no place in their nefarious and cruel scheme, it puzzled them for the moment considerably.

"Am I expected, Sire," the Queen now said, "to answer such a question as this before these strangers, whose right to interrogate me on this or any other subject, whatever your Majesty's views may be, I utterly repudiate?"

It consoled me to some extent for my undignified position to observe that I was not included in the look of proud defiance with which Queen Stephanie swept the countenances of her two implacable enemies. So intent, indeed, did she appear upon conveying to these two worthies an intimation of her profound contempt that I believe she was at the time all but unconscious of my own presence.

"Unfortunately, Madam," the King replied, "I am no longer free to choose the mode of eliciting the information I am determined to acquire. There are those whose zealous care for your Majesty's welfare and peace of mind has rendered it necessary for the Queen of Portugal to establish her innocence and fidelity, not only to the satisfaction of her husband, but to that of the world at large."

THE QUEEN WAS STANDING IN THE EMBRASURE OF THE WINDOW, PALE AND EXPECTANT.

For the first time during this interview a frightened look now crept into the Queen's face, and she clutched nervously at the chair by which she was standing, as if to steady herself.

"My innocence!" she murmured, as if she scarce grasped the full scope of the word's meaning.

"In short, Madam," the King continued inexorably, his wrath apparently rising in proportion as the Queen's calmness deserted her, "you will scarcely venture to question a husband's right to know the name of the man who dares to address words of passionate love to his wife."

"A husband's right!" the Queen exclaimed, passing suddenly from her attitude of temporary confusion to one of superb dignity. "To whom do you refer, Sire? The word sounds strange from your lips. A husband's right, indeed! By what right, pray, does your Majesty claim the title? By that obtained by the cruellest deception ever practised upon a credulous and inexperienced woman's heart. Ah, you may start up in anger, Sire!" she continued, waxing, woman-like, bold and voluble as the sense of her wrongs overcame her, and she felt her words strike home. "Your wrath has no terror for me, and since you yourself have elected to expose your wife's fame to the insults of these unscrupulous schemers, I care little in what other respects your Majesty's dignity may chance to suffer. You have questioned me, and I have answered. I do not know the name of him to whom I owe that which your Majesty has seen fit to deny me—the possession of a true heart capable of understanding a woman's soul and measuring its wants and its desires. But if I did know his name, by the heaven above us, no power wielded by your Majesty would succeed in dragging it from my lips!"

There was a recklessness about this confession which staggered me. I heard the King catch his breath spasmodically, and saw him step forward with an involuntary impulse, then check himself and pass his hand over his brow as if to dispel the impression he had received. When he looked up again, his face had resumed its former cold, steady expression, and only the gleam of angry jealousy in his eyes betokened something of the emotion that was passing within his breast.

"Because you love him, Madam?" he said, fixing her steadily.

"I leave your Majesty to draw your own inferences," the Queen replied, with a disdainful shrug of the shoulder. "Your Majesty's experience in these matters is superior to mine."

Again the audacity of the words amazed me. I have known women in my time who have braved the consequences of their folly or infatuation with a fearlessness equal to that now displayed by her Majesty of Portugal, but it was when their guilt had been established beyond a doubt. Here it seemed to be the purpose of the woman accused herself to sharpen the dagger which she must have known the discovery of her guiltiness would drive home to the heart of him to whom her honour was as his own. Or, once again, were there other, deeper motives underlying her strange conduct?

The King paused a long while before he replied.

"There is one thing my experience has taught me, Madam," he said at last, in a tone of constrained emotion: "it is that no woman wastes her love upon a mere phantom."

"Your Majesty speaks as a man," the Queen rejoined promptly, "and with all a man's ignorance of that which is the essence of a woman's being. How, indeed," she went on scornfully, "can you understand the subtle sympathy that speaks in the voice of pure, unselfish love, or measure its effect upon the heart of the woman to whom it is given—you, who have never learned to bestow it, who, when it was within your own grasp, freely offered, spurned it from you with contempt, as a gift not worth the taking? I am a woman, Sire. You should have thought of that when you made me your Queen. But, woman as I am, Dom Pedro, if no worse sin burdens your conscience than the one for which it pleases you now to call me to account, I will gladly answer with my own soul for your Majesty's salvation."

There was a ring of conscious innocence in the tone of these words which, I think, affected the King, for I saw his countenance soften as they fell. Nor was I the only one who observed this fact. Both the Marquis and his companion noted it with inquietude. Notwithstanding his jealous suspicions, which were certainly not without good cause, the Queen's influence upon her husband had never abated one jot, and these men may possibly have feared that even now, at this most critical moment, its power might still assert itself to defeat the end they had so long schemed to accomplish.

"Sire," said the Padre, now interposing for the first time, in a soft, insinuating

voice, "would it not be advisable to assure her Majesty that the miscreant who has so ruthlessly dared to tamper with her Majesty's fair fame, and imperil her peace of mind, is already beyond the protection which she would magnanimously extend to him by her silence and secrecy? When her Majesty learns how little worthy he is of the consideration she has been pleased to show him, her reluctance to add her own testimony of his guilt to that which has already accumulated against him may be more readily overcome."

The Queen regarded the priest with a look of dumb, shrinking terror. Then her eyes turned slowly to the King, as if to seek his support and succour.

"I do not know whether this man speaks the truth, Sire," she said, in a low, almost faltering voice. "But if he does, I beg of your Majesty to spare me the pain of hearing that which he desires to inflict upon me. My God!" she burst out passionately, "against whom have I sinned that I should be thus tortured? Is a woman to whom the love that was hers by right divine has been cruelly denied to be robbed even of the dream of love that has taken its place? It has been my only solace, my only bliss, in all these weary, dreary months. Why should I deny it? You may desecrate that happiness, Sire," she continued, lapsing once more with characteristic abruptness into the defiant, taunting tone she so often adopted towards the King, "you may desecrate that happiness by giving it a form and substance my soul has never dreamed of. It will but crown your cruel work. Is it not the boast of the feeble that they can destroy what they cannot create?"

"Stephanie," the King exclaimed, seizing her wrist in an access of anger, "you try me too far. Because I have borne your taunts and stings all these months in patience, do not think the power to resent the deepest insult woman can inflict upon man has forsaken me. Your Majesty," he went on, forcing himself to resume his cold, calm manner, "may perhaps indulge in dreams of a love that has no form or substance; but he to whom the world points as the Queen of Portugal's lover, nay, whose own open boast it has been that he is the creator of that shadowy happiness to which your Majesty clings with so much tenacity, is a being of form and flesh, and his name, Madam——"

The Queen raised her hand as if to ward off what was coming.

"His name," the King concluded, fixing his gaze searchingly upon her, "as these gentlemen will tell you, is Francisco Conde d'Aguiar."

The look of horror which settled upon the Queen's face as the name of the Conde fell from Dom Pedro's lips was so intense that I think it must have convinced even the Padre and his fellow-schemer of the utter falsity of their deductions, supposing them ever really to have possessed any. Whoever the Queen may have suspected of being her passive lover—and I was convinced at this moment that his true identity had never been revealed to her—it was certainly not the Conde d'Aguiar. I remembered the King's scornful reference to the Conde when I somewhat rashly mentioned his name during my interview with his Majesty, and I cast a furtive glance at his face to see what expression it bore. But it still wore that obstinate look of jealous distrust which, even during his outwardly calm and impassive demeanour, had never left it.

"Well, Madam?" he said at last ironically. "You are silent. Is it from astonishment that the Conde d'Aguiar should have dared to claim a merit which you have so long fondly ascribed to another?"

For a moment the Queen gazed at him with an expression that seemed to denote a pending outburst of wrath. But the outburst did not come. Of a sudden all her courage appeared to forsake her, and her self-possession suffered a total collapse. She threw herself into the chair that stood beside her, and, covering her face with her hands, burst into a violent fit of sobbing.

"Oh! this is cruel, cruel!" she murmured. "And from you, of all men."

There was something so intensely pathetic in the tone of the words, and in the action that accompanied them, that they might well have moved a heart of stone. But if they produced a feeling of compassionate emotion in my breast, their effect in another quarter was of a kind so startling that for a moment I could scarcely believe my own senses.

Never in my life have I witnessed change more absolute and lightning-like in its rapidity than that which these simple words wrought upon the countenance of the man to whom they were addressed. Amazement, incredulity, pity, triumph—all these emotions seemed to sweep across it at one and the same time. For some seconds he stood gazing at the Queen, dumb and irresolute. Then, with a swift, almost fierce movement, his Majesty turned to us.

"Leave us, Senhores!" he exclaimed. "Leave us, I say!" he repeated sternly, seeing that the Padre, instead of obeying, showed a desire to speak once more.

The order was too imperative to be disregarded, even by a father confessor. The Padre bowed deferentially, and withdrew slowly and reluctantly with the Marquis to the antechamber.

I followed like one in a dream. The whole occurrence had taken place so quickly and had come so unexpectedly that I felt fairly dazed, and it must have been some minutes before I had sufficiently collected myself to realise its true import. When I did so it was with a thrill of pleasure such as I scarcely ever remembered having experienced before, and which I had some difficulty in concealing from the many curious eyes which I now saw fixed upon me and my two companions. For the Queen's antechamber, which had been empty save for one or two members of her Majesty's suite who were on duty there when we passed through it half an hour before, had meanwhile become thronged with an anxious crowd, who had doubtless been attracted thither by the report of the King's unexpected visit and its object, and who stood about in various groups discussing the situation in subdued whispers.

Our sudden exit from the Queen's cabinet had evidently caused considerable surprise; but I could see from the air of respectful solicitude with which the Marquis and the Padre were regarded by everyone present that they were still looked upon as masters of the situation. I glanced across at the two men, who had withdrawn to a window recess, where they were conversing together with much animation. Their looks indicated that, although the strange incident we had just witnessed had startled them, their belief in their ultimate triumph was still unshaken.

However, as minute after minute passed without any reassuring sign coming from the royal cabinet, their manner changed somewhat, and I gathered from the occasional restless glances which they cast in the direction of the door through which we had just issued, that doubts as to the outcome of it all were beginning to dawn on them. And, indeed, had they not been so utterly blinded by their political passion, the true state of affairs must have revealed itself to them as it had revealed itself to me—in a manner so simple that I groaned inwardly as I now thought of the blundering incompetence I had displayed.

My own position, as may be conceived, was growing well - nigh intolerable. Indeed, had I consulted my own desires, I would have seized the opportunity that now offered to escape from it. But I feared to offend the King if I left the Palace without his permission. So I stayed.

Presently, the Marquis de Albuquerque, who had been watching me for some time restlessly from the distance, left the Padre and approached me with an assumed air of jauntiness. Placing his arm familiarly in mine, he drew me aside, and inquired, in an undertone which attempted to be quizzical, whether, after all I had seen and heard, I still adhered to my belief in the immaculate virtue of Queen Stephanie.

"Sir," I said, bowing with mock deference, "your achievement has exceeded my most sanguine expectations. The King, indeed, owes you an eternal debt of gratitude."

He noticed my ironical tone, but misinterpreted its meaning.

"Bah!" he answered. "The woman has played her cards well. The King is weak, but it will not last. When we confront her again——"

"I do not believe, Senhor Marquis de Albuquerque," I said, interrupting him, "that you or your friends will ever have the honour of seeing the Queen's face again."

He looked at me with a frown.

"Not, at least," I added, "if her Majesty's lover is the man I take him to be."

I felt a nervous grip on my arm as I uttered these words. It was the Padre Antonio, who had come up behind us and overheard what I said. There was a world of question in his eyes, but before he could speak the Marquis exclaimed with a sneer, "We have convinced you at last, then, that the Queen has a lover."

"Absolutely," I rejoined; "and I think he is one, Senhor Marquis, whom you and your friends would have done well to beware of."

"Do I understand, Sir," the Padre said in his dulcet tones, glancing cautiously around to assure himself that there were no listeners near, "that you possess means of identifying the person who harbours this treasonable passion for the Queen's Majesty?"

"I possess no other means than those which were but a few minutes ago at your Reverence's disposal," I answered. "Only possibly my unprejudiced mind was better able to make use of them."

"Then who, in the devil's name,"

exclaimed the Marquis, with some perplexity, "do you suppose is the Queen of Portugal's lover?"

The insolent brutality of the question disgusted me, and, shrugging my shoulder, I would have turned away. But before I could do so the priest's grip was again upon my arm, and I saw his little beady black eyes fixed searchingly upon my face, as if he would read into my very soul. Suddenly a hot flush of excitement mounted to his sallow cheeks, he released his hold of my arm, and stepped back a pace, like one who has seen a strange apparition.

"Sancta Maria!" he murmured, still staring at me, as if there were something in my face that fascinated him. "Sancta Maria! could it be possible? The King himself——"

He did not conclude the sentence. But it was not difficult to guess that he, too, had now grasped the situation as I had grasped it before him.

The Marquis stood with a bewildered look, glancing first at me and then at the Padre. As the meaning of the latter's words broke in upon him, however, he burst into a muffled laugh of derision.

"What!" he exclaimed. "You believe that it is the King himself who has been writing this passionate love-poetry to his wife?"

"I believe, Senhor Marquis," I replied, "that the Queen of Portugal's lover is the only man who has the right to the title; in other words, her husband."

There was a moment's silence. Then I saw a look of intense dismay steal over the countenance of the Marquis, and he raised his hand to his head in a helpless, aimless kind of way, as if he were not quite sure it was still there. The Padre, however, to my surprise, showed quite a different appreciation of my words. Almost forgetting his priestly dignity in his great agitation, he turned suddenly with a gesture of malicious triumph to his companion.

"If this should prove true," he exclaimed, "and, by Heaven, I think this man is no fool, the day may yet be ours, my friend."

The Marquis looked at him in astonishment. For my part, I could not help smiling to myself at this conclusion, instancing, as I thought it did, the blind tenacity with which this vindictive spirit clung to its cruel purpose.

"I doubt it," I said drily.

"You forget, Sir," the Padre said, turning again to me and resuming his usual suave, priestly tone, as if he were already pouring his sophistical arguments into the ears of his royal penitent, "that but for the Queen's culpable secrecy regarding the receipt of these verses, his Majesty's suspicions would never have been aroused. The fact, supposing it to be the fact, that it was his Majesty himself who addressed them to her will, I fear, rather aggravate than lessen the Queen's guilt in Dom Pedro's eyes, inasmuch as she unfortunately attributed them to a very different source."

I confess I was for an instant somewhat disconcerted by this astute reasoning, for there was apparently some truth in it, and I realised the possibility of its being made use of as a weapon against the Queen. But, curiously enough, the Padre's words suggested to me the solution of the only thing which up to that moment had still been a riddle to me—namely, the Queen's strange conduct *vis-à-vis* of her unknown lover, and it was with something in the nature of an inspiration that I replied—

"Pardon me. That the Queen attributed these verses to any other source than their true one is your assumption, not mine. But the subject is scarcely one which it beseems us to argue in this place," I added, with a significant look at the groups of those present, who, during our somewhat heated conversation, had gradually drawn nearer to us. "Moreover, I think the question is likely to be determined more satisfactorily elsewhere, and without your aid."

I had not finished speaking when a side-door to the left of the Queen's apartment opened, and the chamberlain on duty, who had announced the King's visit to her Majesty, stepped hurriedly into the anteroom. There was such a curiously mingled expression of astonishment and concern upon his face as he made his way through the throng of courtiers to the spot where we were standing that I imagined for an instant he might be the bearer of some evil tidings. But he halted abruptly when he reached us, and raising his voice so that all could hear, said—

"I have the King's commands, Senhores, to inform you that his Majesty no longer requires your services."

I bowed with a sense half of relief, half of shame, for I felt that this curt message of dismissal was addressed to me as well as to my two companions. Not so, however, the Marquis and the Padre. They received the royal command in dogged silence, but showed no sign of yielding their ground.

A buzz of excitement had passed through the room at the conclusion of the chamberlain's speech. Then the Padre's voice responded quietly—

"The King's commands, Sir, are somewhat rudely conveyed. If we are to understand that his Majesty refuses to give further ear to those whose duty it is to counsel him, we must, of course, content ourselves to await such opportunity as may be afforded us of gaining speech with his Majesty. Having accompanied him hither, we are bound by sheer respect to bide until his Majesty pleases to return to his own apartments."

I saw through the plan, which was to waylay the King when he left the Queen, and seek to undo whatever good might have resulted from the private interview between them. The Padre had great notions of his influence upon his royal master, and from what I knew of it I had some reason to fear its effect just now. But my apprehensions were to prove groundless.

While the Padre was speaking there was still a trace of surprise, almost of consternation, noticeable in the countenance of the chamberlain, whom I knew as a loyal servant and profound admirer of Queen Stephanie. But it was now swept away by the ironical smile which the Padre's last words called forth from him.

"Your Reverence will please yourself," he said simply. "But I fear you may have somewhat long to wait."

"Explain yourself, Sir!" the Padre rejoined haughtily.

"I mean," the chamberlain replied, "that the King is not likely to afford your Reverence the opportunity you desire. *His Majesty sups to-night alone with the Queen.*"

If a thunderbolt had fallen in the midst of those who heard this announcement it could scarcely have caused a greater sensation; for everyone knew that Dom Pedro had never supped alone with his Queen since the day of their marriage. What it signified was unmistakable, and indeed, the look of utter despair and rage which this, under normal circumstances, not very extraordinary piece of intelligence called forth in the faces of my two companions proved that they understood its full import. The strangest effect of all, however, was the instant change that took place in the demeanour of the onlookers towards the men whom but a moment ago they had treated with so much profound diffidence and respect. One and all now fell back, leaving as great a space as the circumstances allowed between themselves and the crestfallen couple.

As for myself, I believe I am not of a vindictive temperament, but I admit willingly that I have rarely experienced a sweeter sensation than that afforded me by the spectacle of misery which they presented.

While the crowd of courtiers eagerly surrounded the chamberlain, and plied him from all sides with anxious questions as to what had taken place between Dom Pedro and Queen Stephanie to bring about their reconciliation just at the moment when a complete rupture had seemed a certainty — to all of which inquiries the official replied with a shrug of the shoulders—I quietly made my way to the door, hoping to get away unobserved. But I had not reached the threshold when I felt a hand laid on my arm, and turning looked into the face of the Padre Antonio. There was a strange expression of suspicion in it, and his eyes were fixed upon mine with a gaze of such vindictiveness that I involuntarily retreated a step; but he did not relax his hold.

"You knew of this," he said in a tone of concentrated passion, "and have helped to fool and foil us. But beware! We still have weapons against such as you."

His manner was so menacing that it roused my anger, and I shook him off somewhat roughly.

"Your threats do not frighten me," I said. "But you are mistaken. When I came here I was as ignorant of the real truth as I believe their Majesties themselves were. It is to you and your fellow-villain that each now owes the knowledge which was lacking to reconcile and unite them, and without which, Heaven knows what fate would have been theirs."

I think he saw the force of my words, for he made a gesture of impotent rage.

"If you had no part in this farce, then," he said, "what purpose was your presence here intended to serve?"

"That is a question which would be better addressed to the King himself," I replied. "I presume, however, that his Majesty desired to have at least one witness of this interview upon whom he could rely to give the true version of its result to the world, whatever that result might prove to be. Your Reverence," I added, "may rest assured that he will have no cause to rue his choice."

With these words I turned upon my heel, and, leaving the priest to master his wrath as best he could, quitted the palace.

"This, then, is the story of the Queen of Portugal's lover," Sir John concluded. "Its sequel—the reconciliation of Dom Pedro and his wife, and, alas! the short duration of their wedded happiness, is a

matter of history, and no doubt familiar to all present. As for the other actors in the curious drama of which I so unexpectedly became a witness, there remains little to be said. The Marquis de Albuquerque did not wait to ascertain the consequences of his ignominious defeat, but, like his friend the Conde d'Aguiar, sought safety in instant flight. The Padre Antonio, too, though his cloth placed him beyond reach of the King's vengeance, thought it expedient shortly afterwards to disappear from the capital. Of the ultimate fate of the two I know nothing. As for myself, my participation in these matters ended on the day of the interview I have described. Dom Pedro, although he received me very graciously a few days later—and, indeed, ever afterwards treated me more like a friend than a stranger—never alluded again to the subject."

We sat silent for a while after Sir John had finished. Then the Prince remarked, "It is a strange story, truly. But it seems to me to contain some puzzling elements. That King Pedro, under the circumstances, should have grown jealous of the blissful effect of his own love-making is only too comprehensible. But how about the Queen's conduct throughout the whole affair? If she really believed, as your words imply, that her secret correspondent was the King himself, it is somewhat extraordinary that her demeanour towards him should have been such as it was."

"Pardon me if I differ from you, Sir," replied Sir John. "It was just that demeanour which, to my mind, made it perfectly clear that her Majesty had—originally, at least—suspected the truth. You must not forget that Stephanie of Hohenzollern had loved Dom Pedro. Would any woman so far demean herself as to treasure the poetic effusions of a man whose very name and personality were unknown to her? No; the King was right. A woman does not waste her affections upon a mere phantom. The man she loved had wronged her, and though her love for him was still existent, she was, in spite of that love, too much of a woman to forgive her injuries so lightly. Hence her obstinate repulsion of Dom Pedro's advances, and her silence with regard to the receipt of the verses, which aroused the King's not unnatural suspicions. For my part, I believe that Queen Stephanie's irritable and disdainful manner towards Dom Pedro commenced when, misled by his growing jealousy, she began to doubt the true authorship of those verses. Then, and then only, did her phantom love, to employ the King's phrase, begin. But, phantom though it was, it had been born of real flesh and blood, and that flesh and blood was the King, her husband. I do not profess to be a psychologist," he added, "but I think I recognise here the elements of one of those stirring soul-tragedies with which our present-day novelists are so fond of delecting us; and, indeed, had it not been for the meddling intervention of those intriguing scoundrels, it is more than likely that such a tragedy would have ensued."

The Prince reflected a moment.

"Your deductions sound certainly plausible," he said, still apparently but half convinced. "Yet I confess the Conde d'Aguiar's part in the drama is a riddle to me. If he knew himself to be innocent of the authorship of the verses, why did he take flight?"

I saw Sir John's grey eyes light up with one of those flashes of ironical humour which I had learned to regard as a sure indication of some coming point of interest.

"Sir," he said, "I owe the Conde d'Aguiar a lesson which has proved of some service to me in my career—namely, that it is a grievous mistake to think a man is a fool as long as there is a possibility of his being a knave. I have reason to know that this precious Conde, far from being merely the vain coxcomb I had taken him for, was in reality the chief agent in the vile conspiracy against a pure woman's honour—in other words, that he had acted all along with deliberate intent to compromise the Queen in the eyes of her husband. But for the discovery that her Majesty had a secret correspondent, and the use made of it by these scoundrels to confirm the King's suspicions regarding the Conde, which dastardly scheme the latter no doubt purposely abetted by his precipitate flight from the capital, it is probable that the foul conspiracy would have triumphed after all. As it was, the intrigue, as I have said, failed because it proved too successful; for had the King not fallen into the snare laid for him, and suspected the Queen, he would probably never have learned her real feelings, nor she the true identity of her lover. I admit," the old gentleman added, with a whimsical smile at his illustrious critic, "that my story may be lacking in many desirable qualities; but as an instance of villainy defeating its own ends, I fancy it may claim to possess some merit."

And, indeed, I think we all agreed that Sir John was right.

THE HON. WALTER ROTHSCHILD AT TRING PARK.

Photographs by J. Newman, Berkhampstead.

TRING, say the guide-books (or my guide-book says it, at any rate, writes a representative of *The English Illustrated Magazine*) is an old town with a great church. I had not come down into Hertfordshire this morning, however, to see either Tring or its church, but to pay a visit to the Natural History Museum of Mr. Walter Rothschild; and about that my guide-book was characteristically silent. The fame of the Museum has travelled far indeed, yet I must confess that I remembered nothing about it so clearly as I did the fact that Mr. Walter Rothschild drove a team of zebras. The zebras recollection, unscientific and merely picturesque though it was, prevented me forgetting quite the great zoological work that is being done at Tring. Apparently there had been nothing to keep me from forgetting altogether the great church. Of Tring, the town, I think I knew one thing only: Gerald Massey was born there. He had been a "hand" at the silk-mill by the canal-side in his young days. Later in my excursion, listening to Tring's lament for the shutting-up of this silk-mill, I remembered the poet, and put a question here and there, and had not the felicity of hearing very much about him, this prophet, too, having small honour in his own country, as it seemed to me.

I arrived at Tring Station, therefore, with a mind singularly uncharged with any information regarding either the Museum or those contingent interests, the old town and its great church. I had not driven through a hundred yards of hedgerow before the gentleman who handled the leathers (we are a horsey people at Tring) had boxed the compass for me of interests in this corner of rolling Hertfordshire. Over there as the whip points is Mentmore, where Lord Rosebery lives when he does live there—he married a Rothschild, we are to know—only he generally is at The Durdans. That stone? That commemorates the opening of the canal, the Grand Junction. Here, again, lives a gentleman whose ancestors, men and gentlemen, we know now to their last virtue for several generations. Beyond yonder strip of wood, on this side Buckinghamshire, Hertford is owned by Rothschilds—all bought since Mentmore was bought. And over there is Bedford. We are just a corner, as you see. And now, down in the hollow there, banked by the mist-clad rising ground—that is Tring Park, the home of twelve English Kings, Sir, and Nell Gwynne. With the full significance of that percolating through our minds we rattle down the hill into the town of Tring, and descend at the Park gates.

The gates, iron-wrought, of delicate pattern, are flush with the street, or nearly flush with it, and are flanked by very quaint and picturesque new offices, with gables and eaves that pleasantly break the rising and falling roof-lines of the old

town. The avenue of elm and chestnut that runs from them leads quickly to Tring Park House, with its fine Italian front; but I have a hankering still for the church across the street, and must see it first, inside and out, with the help of a modestly proud native or two. A delightful old building! Before I leave it, I have made a discovery connected with those zebras for which I have ever been keeping an eye on the street—no less a discovery than the identity of a church-proud inhabitant with their farrier, the one and only to shoe the brutes. Now, according to him, the ways of zebras when they are being shod are so terrible—"like a lion's," he says, their kickings so unmentionable, that if, before, I was in a fever to see the team, now I am at a glowing white heat; whereupon he informs me that the zebras are here no more, that, like Americans whose usefulness has not lasted so long as their virtue, they have gone to Paris. Then it is brought home to me that my expectations have been ranging far from the severe path of science, and I step along to the Museum with a mind chastened of its levity.

The Tring Museum is the development of a hobby. While still a boy, the Hon. Walter Rothschild, the eldest son of Lord Rothschild of Tring Park, took a delight in natural history. Butterflies and birds were his favourite study; and by and by, when mammals were added to these, the adequate housing of the collection became a pressing matter. And not only had the number of specimens increased enormously; the scientific value of the collection had become great, and the scientific intention of it more fixed. Thus to-day we have this pretty but serviceable building at Tring, at once a museum and a workshop. Mr. Rothschild is careful to make us understand that this is not a mere collection of curiosities. The researches are confined to zoology—to birds and insects chiefly. The museum proper, as we shall see when we enter it presently, holds many rare and curious specimens; but these do not represent the real treasures of the place. In almost all cases they are duplicates, placed here with others more common, and somewhat popularly labelled, in accordance with one part of Mr. Rothschild's intention in the collection—the education and intelligent amusement of the public.

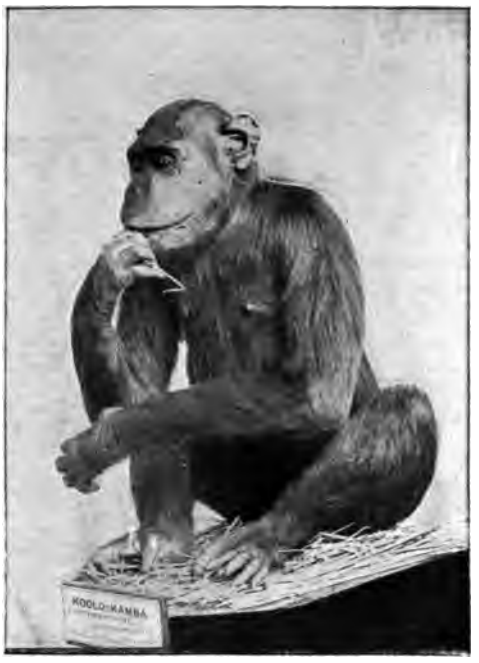
THE HON. WALTER ROTHSCHILD IN HIS STUDY AT THE MUSEUM.

The other and chief intention of the collection is real sound research work. That is carried on by Mr. Rothschild and

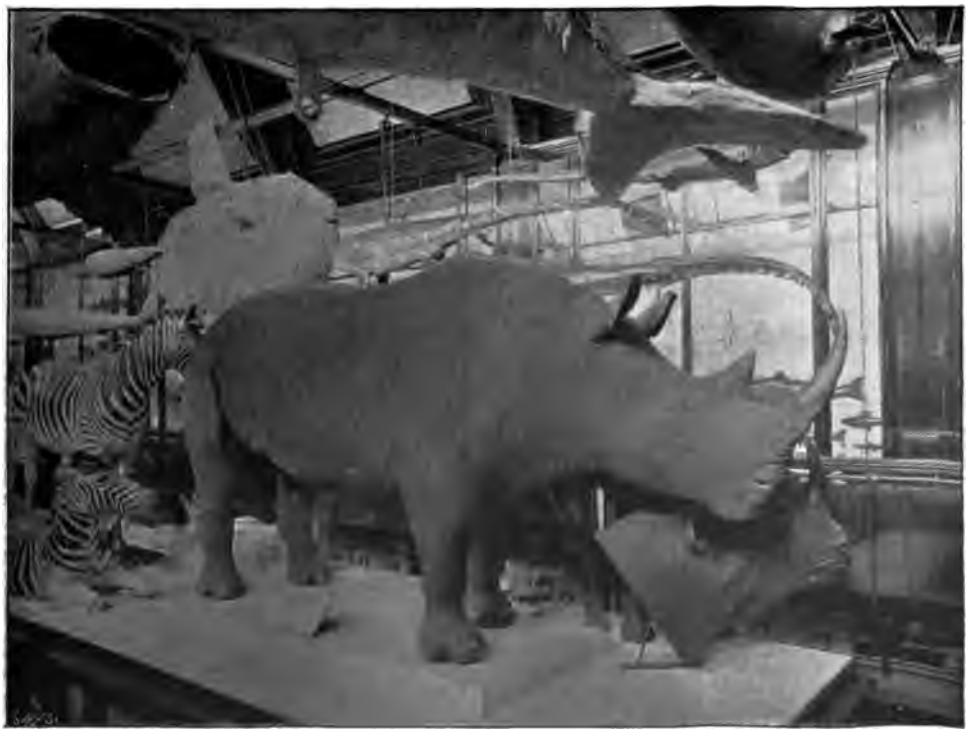
TRING PARK. THE HOUSE FROM THE SOUTH-EAST.

THE TEAM OF ZEBRAS.

his colleagues here, Dr. Ernst Hartert and Dr. K. Jordan, in the studies and workshops, to which the public are not admitted. It is carried out, too, in the various countries where Mr. Rothschild has men to collect for him. For example, researches are being made at present, we believe, among the birds of Heligoland, and here, in Dr. Hartert's room, we are shown a volume, published from the museum, dealing with the avifauna of the little islands north-west of the Sandwich, districts hitherto practically unexplored by the naturalist. Such is the nature of the work in which Mr. Rothschild himself and his colleagues are patiently engaged, day by day, down at this little town in Hertfordshire. Some record of their labours is to be found in the *Novitates Zoologicæ*, an illustrated journal of zoology connected with the museum, of which two volumes have appeared. The articles for the most part are in



THE LATE LAMENTED "SALLY,"
Formerly a well-known occupant of the Zoo.



A CORNER IN THE MUSEUM: THE VERY RARE SQUARE-MOUTHED OR WHITE RHINOCEROS, WITH A HEAD OF THE COMMON SPECIES FIXED BELOW IN CONTRAST.

English, although French and German are admitted, and generally they deal with species of which there are types at Tring. Some idea of the work is to be got from this publication; but, to understand it aright, you must have peeped behind the scenes—at the library, fully equipped with zoological books; at the "dens" of the naturalists, with the traces of the scientific food they have been devouring; and into the work-shops, where are cases of insects innumerable, and stacks of drawers, full of birds in the skin, all carefully described for future reference, each with the date and place of its collection.

Now, having made a tour of these private working-rooms, we descend again to the

A BUZZARD.

entrance-hall, where the eagle-owl, with outspread wings, fixes glittering eyes upon you. Inside the public museum we meet at once with an old friend under a new name: *Koolo Kamba. Anthropopithecus calvus*, says the label; but, in truth, this is "Sally" of the Zoo that was. The learned naturalist at our elbow, however, does not give us long to indulge the sentimental reflections that seem appropriate to the occasion. He carries us off from Sally, surrounded by hideous gorillas and orang-outangs, to point out the rare black-spined Echidna, *Prœchidna Nigroaculeata*, from New Guinea. And so, wandering through the magnificent collection, we linger over this or that in it which strikes us as curious or specially beautiful in its setting, or appeals to our sportsman's taste, while the mentor at our hand forbids us passing on without taking note of what is unique.

"GIANT" AND "BENNETT" KANGAROOS.

Here are very beautiful and complete cases of geese, and swans, and gulls; there, again, of game-birds—pheasants, grouse, quail, the ptarmigan, and the stately blackcock; while near by are the sporting fish, from the burn trout to the tarpon which tempts the adventurous

CRANES.

angler among us as far away as Florida is. Upon the cases in the centre of the ground-floor are placed the larger specimens, which are best seen from the gallery that runs right round the hall. To this presently we ascend by a staircase, at the top of which stands a crowded case of humming-birds, notable, we are informed, because they were mounted on the spot by the man who shot them. And here, in passing, we may mention that Mr. Rothschild's collection of birds of Paradise is especially rich and choice.

ZEBUS.

Just inside the gallery is a case of corals. We had noticed with pleasure on the walls on the way up some of the photo-mezzotype reproductions of Mr. Saville Kent's photographs of the Great Barrier Reef. Here, by the door, is a stack of drawers containing a very beautiful collection of British butterflies and moths; and on the top of them is an enormous hornet's nest, taken, if we remember rightly, from a cottage in the town. While we are speaking of big things, let us not forget the great African elephant's head close by.

Fairly inside the gallery now, we survey the monsters. To do so, we lean upon the gallery railing, and observe that round it there are fixed neat insect-cases. Monsters of sea and land! Sharks and saw-fish, and great whales; the ferocious Gaur bison; a Sumatran rhinoceros, hideously at ease; and—"a king among them a'"—Burchell's square-mouthed, or so-called white, rhinoceros, now almost extinct. This enormous brute was collected in North-Eastern Mashonaland by Mr. R. T. Coryndon, the famous African hunter, from whom there has just come to the museum the news of his return to

ONE OF THE EMU INHABITANTS OF TRING PARK.

A CASSOWARY.

Mashonaland from a hunting trip into the interior. There is only one other specimen of this rhinoceros in England—in the British Museum—and it, too, belonged to Mr. Rothschild. Zebras, and a giraffe, and a great white ostrich, and the Malayan tapir occupy our attention next; and then we turn to the sea-fish in the cases around, among which one could spend an hour or two.

A spiral staircase leads from the gallery to the recently added Antelope Room, specially rich in heads of African game. Here there is a specimen of the brindled gnu, most enduring of the antelopes; and in the case opposite a graceful sable antelope, collected, we observe, in Mashonaland by Mr. Selous. Close by, too, is a full example of the koodoo.

The Antelope Room completes the museum proper, but not the sights at Tring Park. I have said enough to show that Mr. Rothschild is not a mere collector of curiosities, but an ardent naturalist, devoting himself to original research. Not content with the preserved specimens in the museum, he keeps in a large paddock adjoining, in order to study their habits at first hand, live-stock of a curious variety, kangaroos (the "Giant" and the "Bennett" of our Illustration among them); and cassowaries, white cranes, bustards, buzzards, the dwarf zebus, and many more. Unfortunately, the rain comes down in torrents now, preventing a full inspection of the paddock with its huts and cages. Reluctantly we must put off the projected visit to the Dundale spring, a mile away, with its water-fowl and fresh-water fish; and must content ourselves with only a glimpse at the park, where the emu and the rheas roam free.

DUNDALE SPRING, NEAR TRING.

Back again in the old town of Tring, I await within the friendly shelter of the Rose and Crown the 'bus that is to take me to the station. A bunch of little black pigs fly up the street, a blue-bloused herd or two in chase; great black cattle stick their horned heads leisurely into shop doors, unmindful of the raucous shouts and arms and sticks thrown up behind them. The 'bus at last. The afternoon sun sails westwards, and floods the old street as we mount the hill, from the top of which we get a farewell look at Tring.

THE OLYMPIC ERA OF THE GREEKS.

By J. GENNADIUS.

HAD the Olympic Games of antiquity continued to be held at quadrennial intervals, as of old, what would have been the number of the Olympiad just celebrated at Athens?

Before entering upon the solution of this problem it may be interesting, as it certainly is necessary, to give some account of the Olympic Era—the chronological system of the Greeks as used in history. Considering the enduring influence of the events which make up Greek history on the civilisation of the human race, such an inquiry can hardly be out of place at the present moment.

Although the Greeks had, besides religion and language, many other national institutions in common, they followed different modes of determining the lapse of time, special to and connected with the political organisation of the various States. They even adopted a varying nomenclature of the months of the year. According to the Attic chronological system, the names of the successive chief magistrates, the Archons, were applied to their respective years of office; in Sparta the names of the Ephors were used in like manner; while the Argives adopted the names of the Priestesses of Argos for the same purpose.

But the Olympic meetings having rapidly acquired a Panhellenic fame and importance, their celebration was a matter of such widespread interest, it took so deep a root in the customs of the entire race, that gradually it became a matter of course to associate that great festival—recurring, as it did, periodically at fixed intervals—with the recollection of notable events. The Games, however, had not been organised with such a purpose in view; they were not officially regarded as chronological landmarks in the expanse of time.

There exists no record, prior to 776 B.C., of continuity in the Olympic celebrations. But from that year the Eleans, in whose territory the Games were held and who had complete control of the arrangements connected with them, began to keep a regular catalogue of the victors at Olympia; and this they continued to do, with scrupulous care and precision, up to the 249th Olympiad (217 A.D.), when the register closes with the name of Varasdates, an Armenian, said to have been a descendant of the Arsacidæ, and, later, himself a King of Armenia.

In the first recorded Olympiad of 776 B.C., Corœbus, an Elean, is mentioned as victor in the foot-race. The sprint-race, though not calling for the greatest display of strength or skill, was honoured as the most ancient event, the Cretan Hercules having instituted the Games, as it was fabled, by running a race with his four brothers. The winner, therefore, of the foot-race was considered the *eponymus* victor — i.e., the one after whom the Olympiad was named. The names of conquerors in other events were not employed in denoting an Olympiad—the space, that is to say, of four years between two consecutive celebrations of the Games.

Thucydides alone refers on two occasions to Olympiads by naming the victors in the Pancration, both of whom, however, had conquered more than once in that most arduous of all contests—an achievement as exceptional as it was glorious. These two chronological references are therefore memorable, and we may here reproduce the terms in which they are couched: (*a*) "It was the Olympiad in which Dorieus the Rhodian conquered for the second time." (iii. 8); (*b*) "During this summer the Olympia were celebrated in which Androsthenes the Arcadian conquered in the Pancration for the first time" (v. 49).

These are the only two instances in which the Olympian chronological system is employed in earlier Greek history. Later, Xenophon in his "Hellenica" also uses the Olympian reckoning; but in both cases (i. 2, 1, and ii. 3, 1) he adds the names of the contemporaneous Athenian Archons and Spartan Ephors. In like manner Pausanias (iv. 24, 5) and Diodorus Siculus (xi. 70) fix dates by referring simultaneously both to the Athenian

Archons and to the winner of the Olympian foot-race—Xenophon of Corinth, who, though also conqueror, at the same meeting, of the complicated and exacting Pentathlon, is referred to only in his more distinguished capacity of *eponymus* victor.

The later historians employ, in conjunction with the name of the victor, also the number of the Olympiad. The use of the Olympiad as a system of exact historical chronology was first introduced by Timæus of Syracuse, an historian who died about 255 B.C. After him it was adopted by Ælian, Arrian and Diogenes Laertius partially, and by Diodorus Siculus, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, and Polybius more generally. Subsequently it was used by Roman historians also. Polybius relates (xii. 11, 1) that Timæus compared the records of the Athenian Archons, the Spartan Ephors and Kings, and the Argive Priestesses with the catalogue of Olympic victors; that he examined the stone tablets (Stelæ) and the jambs of the gates of the temples, on which public documents were inscribed; and by this diligent verification he rectified errors and enumerated the Olympiads, working backwards to the first, i.e., that of 776 B.C.

As each Olympiad includes a period of four years, some Greek historians state also whether the event referred to occurred in the first, second, third, or fourth year of the Olympiad mentioned. The modern notation of dates thus designated would be: Ol. 150.1 (= 180 B.C.), Ol. 250.3 (= 223 A.D.), etc. But this system of chronology was never adopted officially in State documents. It appears in very few inscriptions and never on coins.

VIEW OF ATHENS FROM THE STADION.

In dealing with dates so recorded, care should be taken lest this system be confounded with another and a later Olympic era, the use of which is but a monument of the adulation offered to the Roman Emperors. The Olympieion, the gigantic temple of the Olympian Zeus at Athens, of which only fifteen columns now remain standing, though begun centuries earlier, was completed under Hadrian only in 131 A.D.; and consequently that year (the third of the 227th Olympiad) was taken as the starting-point of a new Olympic era, in connection with which a minor Olympian festival was inaugurated at Athens. The second "Olympiad" of this new era,

therefore, synchronised with Ol. 228.3—i.e., A.D. 135—and so on. But this chronological system also is very rarely met with in public documents and inscriptions.

Let us now revert to our first proposition. The Olympic Games were held in the first full moon after the summer solstice, which coincides, sometimes with the month of Apollonius, and sometimes with that of Parthenius of the Elean reckoning—the Hecatombæon of the Attic calendar—i.e., in the end of June or the beginning of July. The season of the year when the days are longest and the moonlight is most brilliant was thus chosen for the festival, which lasted from the eleventh day of the month to the fifteenth inclusive. Up to the seventy-sixth Olympiad the celebration was confined to our day only; but on the following meeting (B.C. 472), the Games having been protracted far into the night, the duration of the festival was extended to five days.

The exact origin of the Games is lost in remote antiquity; but there is every evidence to show that at first they were held at irregular intervals. It is only from the year 776 B.C., marked by the victory of Corœbus, that a succession of quadrennial festivals begins and is continued uninterruptedly to the 293rd and last Olympiad, celebrated in 392 A.D., when the Games were finally suppressed by the Emperor Theodosius I. They thus endured for 1169 years, or close upon twelve consecutive centuries.

Now, as 1504 years have elapsed since this latter date, and 1896 years since the 195th Olympiad, which coincides with A.D. 1, it would be easy enough to conclude, by dividing those figures by 4, that the Olympiad just held at Athens should be reckoned as the 669th. But the accuracy of such a reckoning—an apparently simple one—can only be tested by long and complicated astronomical calculations, into which it is not our present purpose to enter. Suffice it to say that the precise B.C. dates corresponding to the Olympic years cited in connection with events in history have to be verified. For this purpose a sure and, indeed, an infallible test is supplied by the eclipses recorded as having coincided with events which

THE ANCIENT SITE OF OLYMPIA IN ITS PRESENT STATE AFTER THE EXCAVATIONS OF 1877-81.

occurred during an Olympic festival. The invasion of Greece by Xerxes, for instance, took place when the Olympic Games were being celebrated. While marching against the Persians, Cleombrotos stayed the advance of his Spartans because he considered the darkening of the sun during the sacrifice he offered to the gods as a bad omen. This was an eclipse which has been ascertained to have occurred on Oct. 2, 480 B.C. The date of another eclipse, referred to by Xenophon in connection with an Olympic year, has been similarly determined as having occurred on Sept. 3, 404 B.C. A like means of verification of Olympic dates is supplied by the incidence of the Pythian Games, which were held in the August of the third year of each Olympiad. Thus, during the battle of Coroneia, which was fought while the Pythia were being celebrated, an eclipse took place. Now the date of this eclipse has been fixed at Aug. 14, 394 B.C.; consequently, the immediately following Olympic festival could only have taken place in 392 B.C. By these means the first Olympiad is determined as having been celebrated in 776 B.C., and the victory of Corœbus, in that year, is the first event in the history of the human race the date of which is ascertainable with absolute accuracy.

The year 776, as well as the three above-mentioned dates, are all divisible by four, which agrees with the 195th Olympiad coinciding with A.D. 1. But years B.C. are not available for mathematical computations without correction; for they join on too abruptly to A.D. years. A zero must therefore be interposed in exactly the same way as in the numeration of the parallels of latitude north and south of the Equator. This reduces 776 B.C., for the purposes of an algebraic calculation, to —775; and this minus figure leads to the conclusion that not the current year, but next year, 1897, would have been the correct date at which 668 Olympiads would have run their quadrennial course and the first year of the 669th Olympiad would have set in. This would have been the mathematically exact computation. But for any practical purpose, the year 1896 is a sufficiently exact date for the resumption of a glorious era; the more so as it possesses the *primâ facie* qualification of being divisible by four, and it permits the next (second) Olympiad to coincide exactly with the beginning of the ensuing century.

HOW SPEEDS THE WOOING?

By ALFRED PERCEVAL GRAVES.

Passionate lover, prithee tell
How speeds the wooing?
Passing well.
She entrancing,
I admiring,
I advancing,
She retiring.
Lover, of thy heart beware;
Too swift haste is slow despair.

Pensive lover, ere we pass,
How speeds the wooing?
Ill, alas!
I complaining,
Pleading, sighing,
She disdaining,
Frowning, flying.
Little hast thou recked my rede,
Such fond haste has scanty speed.

Come, what luck, Sir Lover, now?
For thou bear'st a braver brow.
I returning
Flout with flouting,
She her spurning
Changed to pouting.
Now, if thou would conquer quite,
Rail until she weep outright.

How speeds the wooing? By thine air
Thou to-day hast tidings rare.
My denier,
Scouter, scorner
Sits a sigher
In the corner.
Then the suit is sped indeed,
May the marriage have like speed.

His Passport into Peace

by I. J. Armstrong

HE stood as near the centre of the little room as the exigencies of the bed would allow, and looked round on the familiar scene; to him no longer commonplace, insomuch as it was idealised by the realisation of the hope of his life. The narrow bed, the wooden table, the paintless chair, the ugly mirror, the dirty stove, had all taken a glorified aspect to-day. Thus does happiness in the heart tinge the meanest surroundings. It has been well said of one that by the purity of his own thoughts he cut out the pattern of theirs; so does happiness ennoble the most sordid of lives. It is a question whether those who lead what is conventionally called a "happy life" ever fathom the bottom of true happiness. Unassisted by contrast, can this thing be felt in its intensity? The element of gratitude that is absolutely necessary to the realisation of happiness in its entirety is wanting. Without the cause the capacity can hardly be created. Is it ever heard in a tone in the voice or seen in a quiver of the eyelid of the habitually happy man? Happiness is the rebound of a sad heart, the realisation of long yearning.

He was from the feverish South—a son of the soil, a child of sunshine. The freedom of life, the love of home, the pride of possession, were as the marrow in his bones. The soil was his own, a larger portion than that of most of his neighbours, and had been theirs for generations. And with this racial pride in his mind and burning love in his heart, he had made himself a voluntary exile from the home of his fathers. Hope had kept him alive these years, the hope which this day was fulfilled. The long night of toil was over, day had dawned; he was going home.

He placed the money on a rough bracket on which stood a little blue, white, and yellow splash, pot Madonna and child: pathetic in its crudity, absurd as a work of art, sacred as an epitome of pure faith: the household god, the one visible link in that sensuous chain that bound him for ever to the old home. In all ages we carry our Lares and Penates with us, encased in our bosoms if not discernible to the eye. Above the bracket was a picture, without a frame, of a fair mother and child, beautiful, and of exquisite technique. The image was the symbol, the picture reality; the one the type of the old faith of France—the Priest and the

Madonna, the other the type of the new—Science and the Woman.

Two steps, and he had reached the window—that window that looked on the hard, smooth walls of the air-shaft, into which opened many other windows. But by keeping close to the wall and kneeling down, he could catch a glimpse through the window of the heaven's own blue, the colour of his own sky, as seen in that far-away village up the Roja valley. Then, by standing on a chair and craning his neck, he could just snatch a peep of a break in the wall to the left; and when the wind rose it blew a branch of an acacia-tree that way, and to his hungry imagination the motion of the leaves brought to his yearning heart the memory of his own olives—of the home which in a few days he should see again, which even now he was seeing.

As he gazed at that patch of blue sky, it passed before him: the train dragging itself slowly into the station at Ventimiglia; he, with a leap, bounding on the platform, flinging open his bundle to the officious Customs officers. If he had duty to pay on that petticoat for his mother, that woollen shawl for his sister, that candlestick for Father Antonio, what matter? he was going home! Could this be anything but the best of all possible worlds to the exile who was going home? In his joy he ran that first mile; it was still on the level, but the way was long, his village far up the Roja valley, and the pass was steep. He looked back at the old Porta Romana, that once guarded the Roman road; at the three castles of Ventimiglia, telling of different periods of subjugation; at the blue expanse of sea with its strange semicircle of purple and green, marking where the Roja emptied its waters; then the pull against the collar began.

The broad bed of the river, that had been broken up by islands of graceful oleander, winding channels, and banks of pearly pebbles, gradually narrowed; the peaceful waters, fed by the melting snows from above, became a rushing torrent. There it swirled round some sudden bend, and for a space spread out in little leaps and sparkling pools; while from an oasis of thick foliage the charming proportions of a graceful campanile betrayed the quiet village nestled out of sight, in strange contrast with the signs of dislocated nature around—evidence of the pitiable sport of many a devastating earthquake. Here the rocks had been thrown up in fantastic groups, there lay great yawning gaps, shoots of slippery rubble, a tree hanging by faith alone. He crossed himself, as was only fit and right so to do in those who live in these stricken districts and fear the earthquake above all things.

On the top of that bare rock the outline of an old Saracenic stronghold stood out sharp against the sky; hills of dark fir closed around; at each fresh turn deep-purple pointed hills cropped up, with the tantalising snows of the Alpes Maritimes beyond. So he toiled on, and the evening closed in and the stars came out; but he noticed not the shadows; there could be no darkness to one who was marching to the consummation of his life—the hope that had kept him alive these years of exile. He came to the break in the hills, with Ariole's silver olive mound in their midst, the steps winding up to the village. For an instant he paused, looked down on the old Roman bridge with its one pointed arch that gleamed like the skeleton of a past age in the misty valley below; then he went onward, ever ascending, ever pushing on to the goal of his hopes. And now the hills grew higher, their sides more precipitous, and always the grand snow mountains stood out stronger and nearer than before. The frontier was close on ahead; a few hundred yards or so, and he would once more tread French soil. The hours he had been tramping were forgotten; the darkened archways of the stairway were trodden, the familiar square of his childhood was reached. He entered the church, he knelt before the altar at early dawn and received the priestly absolution. Then Father Antonio bent down and kissed this favourite son of the Church, insomuch as he had kept his vow of chastity even in that great city of Satan—Paris the beautiful. Passing out, he left behind the upper gate, the fountain to which soon would flock the women and girls to wash. A dog rushed down the winding steps, a girl came screaming after, but his eyes were fixed on a tall, stern woman, prematurely aged, but to-day with a great joy in her face. "Mother!"

As the cry passed his lips he threw out his arms, lost his balance, and came down on the floor. The vision that the patch of blue sky had called forth was gone. He rose, shook himself, and in his joy laughed aloud: "Mother! Home!"

Nature in one of her mad freaks had made this son of the soil, this child of a long ancestry who had worked with the spade, a cunning craftsman; and Paris, the nursing mother of skilled fingers, had given him work. The mother and sister at home could handle the spade, till the

vines, dig round the olives; but of itself the land could not give forth sufficient to free it of the heavy burdens that the hand of a spendthrift had laid upon it, or repair the tottering walls, replace the goats and donkeys that one by one had gone to the market. So, blessed by Father Antonio, he left to seek his fortune, to pay off the mortgages, to build up the old house. And he had accomplished all this: moreover, to-day he held in his hand the means whereby he could reach that fair home in the sunny South, and look upon the fruit of his labour. Paris had given him of her kind. She had offered much to the dark stranger with those smouldering eyes, but he touched alone the money which would free the home of his ancestors. He worked alone, slept alone, prayed alone. Paris understood not the love of home in the stranger's heart. Such love is unknown to the child of the boulevard, who finds a friend beneath each tree, whose home is in every street. His father had been spendthrift and scoffer, but he was careful and deeply religious; the religion of his life taking the form of the worship of the Madonna, the pure motherhood, type of the best influence in man's life. But like all others, he cherished in his heart an unacknowledged divinity, and his was called Hope.

All his life he had lived on Hope. As a child he never went out in the morning without the hope that the father who was ruining them might be taken away before evening—that hope had been fulfilled. Hope had sent him forth into the world, the hope of returning home had kept him alive in that world; a hope that was more closely connected with the strings of his life than he was aware of, for since he had found him a friend, he thought the hunger for home had lessened. This friend, this Parisian, had come to him thus.

The firm for whom he worked being chaste doctrinaires of the cause of Humanity, kept their men closely to work on a Sunday; but whenever there fell on a weekday an anniversary in the Calendar of the Commune sufficiently bloody to warrant the granting of a holiday by these zealots in faith, the men had it, let the loss to the firm be what it would.

It was a special anniversary, insomuch as on that day a man who had never been known to utter a harsh judgment or to refuse the hand of mercy to living soul was hustled out of this world. In the eyes of his accusers his sin was great: his life afforded too great a contrast with theirs. There was an inequality in its purity positively insulting to the puristic exponents of Liberty, Equality, Fraternity. Was inequality of Virtue to be tolerated any more than inequality of Wealth?

Our Southern exile had always been a good servant of God, a dutiful son of the Church. The Commune was before his time. Up in that remote Savoyard village they had only heard vaguely of the hot hours of those days of terror. He knew that one of the uncanonised saints of the Church had been martyred that day, and to him it seemed right and very meet that the anniversary should be kept as a holy day.

He had sauntered out to the Bois de Boulogne. Leaving the Jardin d'Acclimatation behind, avoiding the macadamised roads, he wandered among the trees, vainly seeking the nature his soul yearned after with such exceeding longing. At last he found a little shallow stream that held many a pretty reflection of leaf, branch, and grass—a graceful, cultivated, clothed, insipid edition of the rugged, naked nature of the country of his birth. Disappointed and weary, he threw himself on his back and gazed upwards, trying to cheat his reason into the belief that he was resting after a long morning of toil, that the wine in his flask was from his own vines, that the dark spots and splashes between him and the sky were caused by the quivering leaves of his own olive trees as they bent coyly to the warm wooing of the Southern wind; but the illusion would not come. It was pleasant here, but oh! so deadly foreign. This level plain, this long lush grass, this sleepy stream, these motionless reflections, this terrible loneliness. Ah! for one hour of the vines of the sunny South, the loose stone walls, the clatter of mules down the stairways! Tears filled his eyes, and, not being as Englishmen are, he gave vent to his feelings and sobbed aloud.

Then a voice said, "It is a damned world to the poor, a paradise to the rich."

He turned his head and saw, astride a fallen tree, a young man, a canvas propped before him, a palette and brushes in his hand.

"Have you been here all the time?"

"Yes. You were in such profound thought you passed without noticing me. I should not have spoken, only if I had let you go on lying there all unconscious, I could not have helped myself; I should have robbed you of what you have a right to sell."

He smiled and shook his head. "You are mistaken; I have nothing to sell; I am a poor man. My whole possessions could be covered by a few francs." Then he added gaily, as he spun two coppers in the air, "See, to-day I am worth two sous." It was meet that he should be light-hearted, for had he not sent home this morning the first remittance that was to free his land from the usurer's grip?

The artist laughed too, but from another motive. "With that head, those eyes, you call yourself a poor man! My friend, your face is your fortune. You could get sittings in every studio in Paris."

He rose, drew himself up, and said with a magnificent pride, "That would be an insult to my mother, my sister, my ancestors. There is a tale in our village of a girl, Jacquette. She went to Paris as a model; one day when her mother opened her door in the morning, she found Jacquette dead on the doorstep."

"Bah! If she was pretty, you may take your oath she had a gay time of it while it lasted. You would have a gay time of it, and you would not go under like a woman. *Mon Dieu!* with that face you might get some great lady—not of the world—to run you. Stay, don't go off. I see, I apologise. We in Paris do not look upon things in the same way as you of the country, who, I daresay, go to church and say your prayers. Come, my friend, forgive me; on my soul I only meant to help you."

He came back, took the proffered hand. It was the first that had been held out to him since he left his home, far up the Roja Valley.

"We artists are often carried away by a face; I forgot to think of the man behind it. I have apologised to the man; now as to the face. Will you not consider my proposal? There is a lot of money in your face, and if I read rightly you want money. Ah, my friend, I see by the light in your eyes that I am right."

"Money! Yes; and I mean to get it—every penny I want; but not that way. When I left, Father Antonio blessed me and made me swear on the altar that I would never become a model; besides, it would break my mother's heart."

"*Sapristi*, what superstition! The old priest, however, saw where your fortune lay. Damn him! he has taken away my last chance. I thought if I had got you into the studios you might have given me a sitting or two out of gratitude. I cannot afford to pay models now, and—I am married."

"Married! you look so young; but you are clever. I don't know anything about painting, but I do know trees when I see them; those are trees on your canvas. Are you what is called a landscape painter?"

"No; but nature, thank God!" (for curiously enough this artist was always calling on the God in whose existence he professed not to believe) "does not charge for sitting. Were it otherwise, poor devils like myself would chuck up palette and brushes, and flock in battalions to the Seine."

"It seems to me that it is all work and hunger and misery in this Paris of yours."

"Paris, the most beautiful, the gayest city in the world—the Heaven of the rich! No. It is not the fault of Paris, but that of cursed poverty. Paris offers to the poor student what no other city does; she gives of her gaiety even to the poor. Once, when I had some money, I went to London to see the English pictures. *Mon Dieu!* what a hell for the poor! what horrors! what cant! Here we live, love, and laugh; but those English devils with a hymn-book in one hand, a sermon on their lips, take it in the raw."

"I, too, have seen the English: in the winter they sometimes come in carriages up to our village. They put silver in the church-box, they give money to those who ask for it. They lose their way among our vineyards and olives, they think our country very beautiful and warm, and they always ask for flowers. Those with yellow hair and blue eyes look like angels."

"It is not only the English who have yellow hair and therefore are angels," returned the artist with a smile. "You should see my wife and child."

"Child! You must have married very young."

"She was an artist too. It is harder work for a girl. She was not like the others; she would not accept help. I could not see her starve, so I married her."

"A man could not have done otherwise."

"*Mon Dieu!* a Parisian could. At the studio they called me a fool. We were very gay at first: she painted the pot-boilers to give me time for my Salon picture, and in the evenings we went out together and enjoyed life; but she has never been the same since the baby came. I wanted her to come with me to-day; she said it was too far. I cannot think what has come over her."

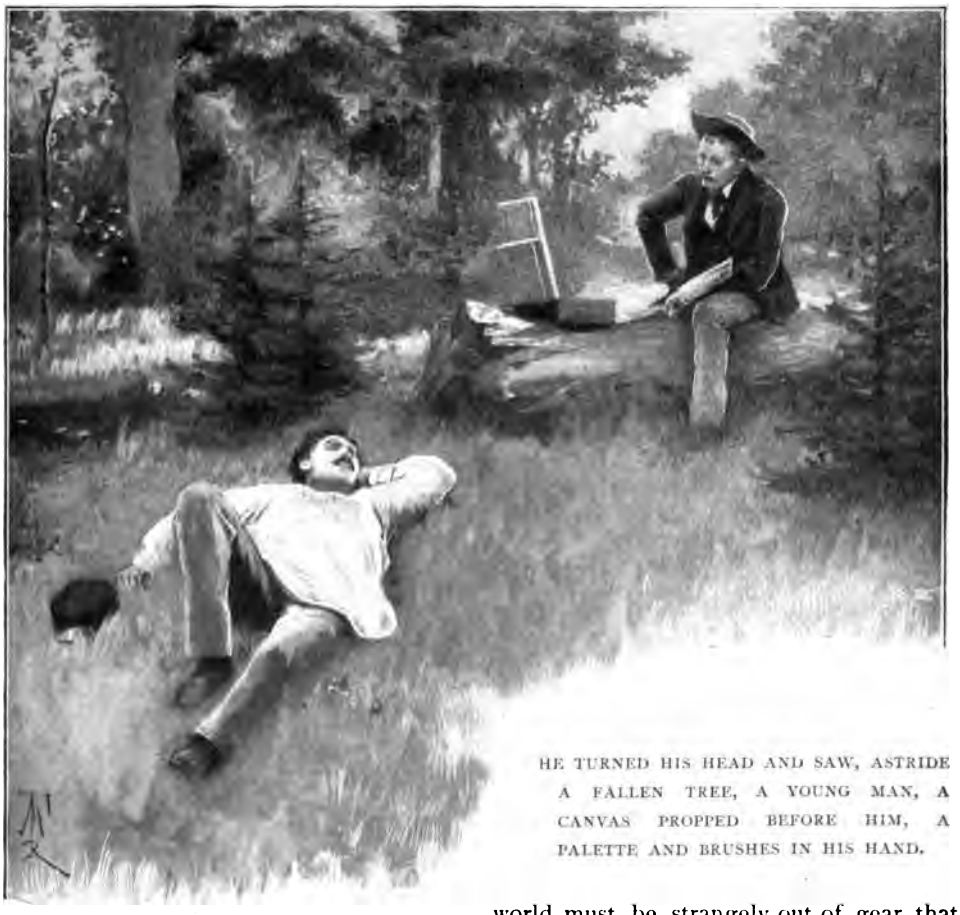
"How old is she?"

"Eighteen."

"Poor girl!" A pause, then, "Would my face really help you?"

"Help? *Mon Dieu!* It is what I have been looking for these years."

"Remember, I am not a model; I come to you as a friend," adding half to himself, "Father Antonio could not object. There can be no sin in helping a woman who is ill, and a little child."



HE TURNED HIS HEAD AND SAW, ASTRIDE A FALLEN TREE, A YOUNG MAN, A CANVAS PROPPED BEFORE HIM, A PALETTE AND BRUSHES IN HIS HAND.

"My wife is not ill," returned the artist sharply. "She does nothing—not even the pot-boilers, few as they are, now. Why should you say she is ill?"

"Because it is natural for women to work hard—all the harder if there is love in it," said he, thinking of the lives of the women in his village, and how his mother and sister toiled from morning to night, all for the love of the land that was theirs.

So the bond of friendship was soldered between the guileless son of the hills and the ex-student of the Rue du Montparnasse. To the former, the young wife, who knew not God and yet had beautiful light hair, and large, sad, suffering eyes, and hands that had known no outdoor toil, was a revelation and a puzzle. He had never come across a woman of her type before, this pretty, delicate creation of a city; and it seemed to him that the world must be strangely out of gear that required frail little creatures like this to work for their living. Unbelief, in the shape of his disreputable father, had been presented to him in so vile a form that it had only seemed just when that father had been smitten down by the hand of God; but, although a good son of the Church, he could not bring himself to believe that that hand could be raised against harmless creatures like the wife and the child of the artist. Was not the Madonna the loving mother of all women, the protector of little children? The woman and the child must turn to her.

While the fierce struggle with poverty raged in the artist's home, they were grateful to give up the little back room to the stranger. Their beds were carried across to the floor of the gallery in the studio, and it was pitiable to see how the baby had been trained to stop talking the moment a knock came to the door, to maintain a dead silence while a stranger was in the studio below.

In the little back room the son of the South stinted and saved until the property of his fathers was once more free. He, too, had grown thin, for out of his meagre allowance to himself there was ever a present to be found for the fair-haired child of the studio. The fire of hope, however, burnt strongly in his eyes. Though he would have to return for a short spell, to put together a little money for a rainy day, that return was but a dim shadow in the distance in presence of the great happiness in which his soul was now steeped. The weary longing of years was over; before him on the bracket, at the foot of the Madonna, lay heaped the pile of francs—the glittering Napoleons. He stood before them entranced, these, the visible means of the realisation of his hope. Now he had the money he would not trifle one moment with his happiness: daybreak would see him on his first stage south. It would be a long journey, for in Republican France the poor cannot travel as do the rich. Third-class passengers are shunted into sidings, turned out at night, kept lagging on the way; but with Hope at the helm no way seems long. He would have so many more hours to dream of the rapturous moment when once again he crossed the threshold of his home.

He fell down on his knees before that makeshift altar, and poured out his soul in a torrent of gratitude to the Virgin Mother.

He was still on his knees when the door opened and the artist came in.

"Ah!" he exclaimed, rising quickly. "You have often talked to me of the happiness of an artist who realises his ideal. I know now; I have realised mine."

"*Mon Dieu!* and it has transfigured you. It is the face of a god."

"Yes. My God has granted the prayer of my life. To-morrow—— But you are not listening. What is wrong? Is it the wife?"

The artist flung himself on the table, and, between sobs, jerked out his tale. "She cannot live in there; he says she is dying by inches; the atmosphere of the studio is killing her."

"You must take her into the country at once."

"So the doctor says: her only chance. I would paint their damned houses, their ugly faces, their signboards, Old Nick himself, for twenty francs a head, to save her. But how are we to get there? We have no money; my Salon picture is not framed; I can raise no money on it. She is an artist too, she will not consent: we cannot betray our birthright by cutting it to please any dealer."

"Cut your beautiful picture, the admiration of all your friends; the picture that must bring you fame! I do not understand."

"Yes, cut out the conventional girl and man at the side, make them into a common pot-boiler. Destroy the thought, the work, the inspiration, the dream of my life! Drag Art through the cesspool of Poverty. She will not consent: better rot in the studio; a little charcoal will soon end it all."

He stood with his face to the Virgin, gazing at that picture of a mother and a child which the artist had given him, half in derision at his seeing through the woman the divinity. Was it the woman or the divinity that now influenced him? What matter? The result was divine. His heart had leapt to a conviction, though his brain had not yet formulated it. He quivered; the shadow of vanished hope passed over him; the spell of a great renunciation enthralled him. There was silence in the room; then he said slowly, and as if he were interpreting a vision—

"Your Salon picture will not be cut. It will be framed; it will bring you the fame you have waited for so long; and your wife shall not die."

"My friend," returned the artist, who had run down the gamut to the very last note of despair, "we are at an *impasse*; there is but one way—charcoal."

The artist moaned and groaned aloud; but no sound passed the tightened lips of the stranger, who still stood with his face to the wall. At last he seemed to come back to life; his eyes left the picture and sought the poor little image of the Virgin below, type of his faith, and it passed through his mind: "What is my renunciation to her renunciation nearly two thousand years ago?" His hands closed on the money; he took it up, every franc, and, placing it on the table before the artist, said with a supreme effort—

"I told you just now that I, too, had

realised my ideal. It was this, to help my friend in his desperate need."

The artist threw up his arms, dazed, staggered; but his face was already changed: hope had entered his heart. He struggled to speak; but his friend stopped him, and, dragging him, still half-dazed to the door, urged him to depart at once.

Then the artist awoke, kissed him on both cheeks, and waving his arms, shouted, "You have saved me! A loan, remember; a loan until better days."

Until better days!

His eyes had lost all look of life in them; his face was grey and drawn; he staggered to the chair; his head fell heavily on his arms. The two men had changed places. Hope had fluttered across to the studio, never again to enter that little chamber. "We live by admiration, hope, and love." The first and the last the studio had always held, the one ewe lamb of the stranger had joined them. When Hope goes out Death smiles and stalks in at the open gate.

II.

His eyes ached with gazing at the ever present whiteness of those walls, the window echoed his bald stare, the interlacing lines on the ceiling seemed slowly to be sapping his mind. For it had pleased a former occupant, a student of design, to lie in bed, and, with the aid of a piece of red chalk tied to a maulstick, worry out his geometrical designs on the ceiling, which he had carefully squared in black chalk. While in work the son of the soil had given no heed to the squares, circles, triangles, trapezia, and parallelograms on the ceiling; his waking thoughts had been more than filled with that ever-present hope within him. Now hope was gone, but the angles and circles remained.

Since the door was bolted on the artist he had had no desire to go on his knees and look up at the sky—the sky spoke of the impossible. The chair had never seen him straining for a glimpse of the acacia; the acacia whispered of a past dream, a light in a world of sunshine that had grown dim to his sight, insomuch as there was no hope of his ever reaching it. That ideal inner world in which he had lived had vanished: if he stretched out his hand he grasped emptiness, there was nothing tangible to lay hold of; only this log of a body lying on the bed, and those circles and lines on the ceiling, twining and intertwining for ever.

Toiling hard day after day, scraping, hoarding, with those glimpses of love and gratitude from the studio, he had lived in ignorance that hope—the hope of returning to his home—had been the sole anchor of his life. Hope had kept him his reason when launched on the cynic world of Paris. Hope had simplified the ornate town services that at first had so awed and bewildered him. Hope had bent his head to the jeers of his fellow-workmen. Hope had kept his hot Southern blood in bounds. In a word, hope had been the loadstone, the divinity of his heart. Take all the creeds of the world, hope—the hope of something better—is what makes them converts. To the wretched the hope of annihilation is sweet—to end it all, to be out of this brutal world for ever. The artist could have sought death with full hope, the stranger could not. God ties his believers to this world by double entry. Indeed, the thought of death in any form had never crossed his brain. We live by love, ambition, hope: the first two necessarily carry the third; but the third can live without the other two. When hope flies away, then love, hand in hand, walks down to the watery grave; it is only when hope is extinguished that ambition draws the sword across the throat. And when hope goes out the world calls it distraught love, religious mania, temporary insanity, or even syncope of the heart.

When the studio was shut and no one now would come up that last pair of stairs, the stranger sat down to review his case. It was simple in the extreme. The main work of his life had been accomplished, the property was free. He had only to begin again to earn that last sum; it was merely a putting off his return till—— That was the rub, he could not see beyond that "till."

This day he should have been in the old home, clasped once more in his mother's arms. To a Frenchman the tradition of the mother is the one thing sacred; to this man it was his all in life.

He was glad that that fortnight's holiday had been granted to him before his renunciation. To have returned to the workshops at once would have been intolerable. Smarting, as with an open wound, his Southern blood would have risen at the least provocation. Now he would have time to pull himself together, to look the question of waiting in the face, to woo back the coy divinity of his heart. He who had held her so long would yet win her to his arms again; all he wanted was time, rest.

He lay waiting for the rebound. There was no work to claim him, nothing to be gained by getting up. His body ached as if physically bruised; his mind seemed numbed, and he was very tired.

WITH A GREAT CRY OF JOY HE FLUNG OUT HIS ARMS AND FELL BACK ON THE PILLOW.

Towards sunset he got up and made himself some coffee; later he would go out for supper. He would have to be very careful, for with his gift had gone his means of subsistence while out of work. But that was a trifle; in the old days of shame at home want had been a daily guest in the house. But that home was growing strangely dim to his sight: the Madonna appeared shrouded in an uncertain mist; the artist, his wife and child, had passed out of mind; but ever present with him were the squares and circles, and angles and parallelograms, and trapezia and curving lines on the ceiling. They held him with a spell, they exacted from him each moment of his waking thought. He counted the squares, he counted the angles, the straight lines,

the circles; he cut the squares into angles, he grouped the angles into rhomboids, he starred circles by equilateral triangles, he followed the curves of the motif, he commenced on the continuous line of a spiral—but that way led to madness.

At dawn he was bathed in a deadly perspiration, his breathing came in gasps, but still he tried to count those lines, to trace out rhombus, square, duodecagon.

He had worked hard, he had had a good day, but it had passed all too soon. He had picked out all the roses, fastened each into its own circle, the circle into its square; but, just when he had begun to trace out an Archimedian spiral the daylight failed, the task that pressed upon him so heavily was rendered impossible by inscrutable destiny.

It was midnight. Those squares and circles and roses still danced before his eyes, and yet he could not count them. The necessity, however, to do so had grown into an acute agony, but they would not rest for a moment, hopping, darting across, whirling round on the dark background. He struggled, he cried aloud, he implored, he prayed, he hit out at the dull darkness, but still he could not count them. He sprang out of bed, he tried to catch them, to grasp them in his hand, to hold them to his heart; but with the action he seemed to fall back into space—black, boundless space—and he was falling, falling. The lines, the circles, the roses grew dimmer and dimmer, until at last there were none; nothing to be seen, nothing around him but dark, cold, illimitable space, and he was still falling.

There is a deadly moment in the four-and-twenty hours when struggling dawn first draws the black veil of night from off her chilly brow. Health sleeps in ignorance of it; death claims this hour as his own.

The stranger moved, a flush burnt in either cheek, his eyes had regained something of their smouldering fire, his lips parted, and he uttered a prayer. His hands, that unconsciously had been plucking at this life, were stilled by a sudden calm, and the voice of the old priest was saying: "My son, thou hast done well with thy life. Behold, the Virgin and——" But the image cast away her blue mantle, drew aside her white veil, and it was his mother who stepped down from the pedestal.

With a great cry of joy he flung out his arms and fell back on the pillow.

* * * *

It was clearly not a case of starvation: there was coffee in the cup by his bedside, half a stale loaf, and two sous in his pocket; yet the case puzzled the doctors. In the Lexicon of Pharmacy there is no heading entitled Hope.

FAILURE.

I plucked a rose
That smiled thro' tears of dew;
It was not rare
Enough, nor fair
Enough for thee!

I breathed a sigh
That died as soft as summer breeze;
It was not spell
Enough, to tell
Enough, to thee!

I fought a fight,
And well-nigh perished for thy sake;
Yet was not brave
Enough, to crave—
Something of thee!

Still thou didst say,
In thy cold, thoughtless dignity:
"I did not care
Enough, nor dare
Enough for thee"!

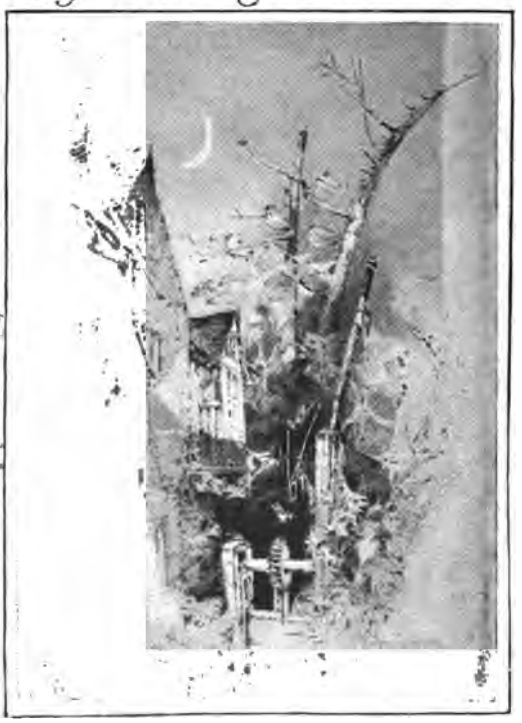
KATHERINE MANN.

"Mariana in the moated grange."
Measure for Measure

Illustrated by Herbert & Frances Railton

With blackest moss the flower-pots
Were thickly crusted, one and all:
The rusty nails
fell from the knots
That held the pear to the gable-wall.
The broken sheds look'd sad and strange.
Unlifted was the clinking latch;

Weeded and worn the
ancient thatch
Upon the lonely moated
grange
She only said, "My life is dreary
He cometh not, she said;
She said, I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead!"



The Poem is published by kind permission of Messrs. Macmillan.

About a stone-cast from the wall
A sluice with black-end waters slept,
And o'er it many, round and small,
The clustered marish-mosses crept.
Hard by a poplar shook alway,
All silver-green with gnarled bark:
For leagues no other tree did mark
The level waste, the rounding gray.
She only said, "My life is dreary,
He cometh not," she said;
She said, "I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead!"

Tennyson

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST.—By Guercino.

From the Picture in the Capitoline Gallery, Rome.

THE TEN-SHILLING CIGAR.

"THE dearest cigar I ever sell?" said the affable and informing tobacconist into whose shop I had dropped for my modest navy-cut. "In this case"—and he pointed to a neat box with five largish, fat, shiny-brown Havanas in it marked "$12, or £2 10s." The card was suggestive, and I looked my thought, I suppose, for he answered it at once: "No, I don't expect to sell any more of them here till next June or July. Perhaps I might if I was at our Fleet Street branch."

"What!" I said; "is it true that the noble efforts of the Society of Authors have already raised the status of the journalist to that extent?"

"Not as far as I know. It's the gentleman from the Stock Exchange or the City office who buys those, or the betting-man who loves to walk about smoking them in the street; but here our main dependence for that class of goods is on the hotel hard by. It's the Americans, you know, that buy them; and I have known as many as seven American millionaires to be staying there in the course of the season. And they demand good tobacco—most of them are connoisseurs in their way. They can afford to be. Now, I remember there was a Mr. ——, who is reputed to own seven millions——"

"Cigars?—I mean dollars?"

"No; pounds. He came in here and informed me that there were no good cigars in this country. 'I beg your pardon,' I said, 'will you allow me to send you a box of the best cigars that are to be had?' He said I might, so I got a hundred of the finest we keep in our headquarters and sent them up to him with the invoice for ninety-five pounds."

"It's a nice thing to be a millionaire," I sighed, hugging my navy-cut. "Did he smoke them?"

"No; he tried one or two, and sent the rest back—with an apology. It's only the betting-man or the very young gentleman who can bring himself to give a pound for a cigar. But it pays us to keep them, if it's only as an advertisement. You see, gentlemen who come in to look at them may buy something cheaper."

"And do the millionaires rise to a ten-shilling cigar?"

"Oh, yes; some of them choose one regularly for their after-dinner smoke—not all, though. Now, a very well-known millionaire was brought in here the other day: you know—the one who made such a good thing out of the Greenland pearl-fishery. I began with cigars at eighteen-pence, and showed him most of our stock. When I had done he looked at me reprovingly, and said, 'Young man, I never in my life gave more than fourpence, and that's my limit.' We couldn't suit him—our stock begins at sixpence."

"Now, frankly," I said, "do you mean to declare that these ten-shilling cigars, to say nothing of the dearer ones, are anything but an expensive freak?"

"Well, yes, in one sense. For instance, they must always be rarities. Look at this one, now; you see the beautiful smoothness of the wrapper—not a vein in it. At the same time the cigar is a particularly big one; each of them contains just about an ounce of tobacco. Now, I don't know whether you have ever seen cigar-makers at work. If you have you'll know that each leaf usually makes two wrappers—one from each side—after the central rib has been drawn out. But in making these special cigars only leaves are used which are big enough for a whole wrapper of the size to be cut between two veins, so as to be smooth and beautiful. Leaves like that are rare — so rare that in a case of ten thousand Flors di Cuba we only get four or five of these. That partly accounts for the price; but, if you like to say so, no doubt the thing is mainly a freak. Now, for my part, I don't think you need ever give more than a shilling for a cigar."

"It's like claret, I suppose; you can get a really fine dessert wine at a fair price, and then fashion and fancy come in to run up particular brands to whatever people will bid for them. And is not even the shilling beginning to be a fancy price?"

"Well, no. To a connoisseur it is worth while paying the extra money up to that. Look at these two cigars now, at

sixpence and a shilling; there doesn't seem much difference, but a good judge would always rather give a shilling for one of these than two of the others. He gets better value."

"Surely things have changed of late? When I was young, now, people thought a shilling an extortionate price for a cigar."

My friend the tobacconist glanced at me meditatively, as if trying to measure my years. "You're quite right," he said; "the fact is the public taste has changed. I've noticed it especially in the last six years. Before that the finest Havanas went to the St. Petersburg market, the second quality to New York, and the third was good enough for London. Now we get the finest cigars in the world here in London, because people appreciate them, and on account, too, of the influx of millionaires, and so on. The public taste has been educated. Just as a man may go to his tobacconist for fourpenny cigars. One day he is persuaded to take a sixpenny one, and finds it worth cultivating. In time the tobacconist educates him up to ninepence, and so the world wags."

"It is rather an expensive course of study?" I said inquiringly. "Yes, for the customer. But we in the trade all serve an apprenticeship to it, as a matter of course. A good palate for tobacco is partly born, but chiefly acquired. It's just like wine, as you said a while ago. Here, when a purchase is to be made, there's just one man who decides it, and that's the governor. Give him a single cigar to smoke, and he will tell you what plantation the tobacco was grown on, who made the cigar, what year it belongs to, and what he can afford to buy it at. We've often tried to deceive him, for a joke, with faked labels and so forth, but it's no use. You see, when a purchase may involve five or ten thousand pounds at a time a man has to be certain."

"And he does all the tasting?"

"All."

"Then what do you do when he has a cold in the head?"

"Then we don't buy anything until he recovers."

I had thought it would be a poser, but it wasn't.

"If you ever think of taking to the cigar business come to us, and we'll tell you all about it," went on my friend, who has something of the benevolence and philosophy of the immortal Prince Florizel. "As it seems to interest you, perhaps you'd like to know a few more things about it. The London cigar business is in the hands of about six people, who get all the genuine Havanas that come to this country. But Havanas, mind you, are not what they were. For a long time the good crops came in a rotation of four years: that was the length of time the ground took to recover its freshness. Thus 1869 was a good year, 1873, and so on up to 1885. Then the regularity broke down. The finest crop in my lifetime was in 1888; since then the good years have been quite irregular, and this year's crop is very poor. You see, the planters have been putting heavy loads of guano on the land to make it bear better, and they have simply ruined it for ever. The only thing that could restore it would be letting it lie fallow for many years, and they can't afford to do it."

"*Nonumque prematur in annum,*" I murmured softly. "You remember Heine's note on the passage? I really beg your pardon—I was thinking of an allied subject. You were saying——?"

"That the fortune of Havanas is over, I fear, for the future. Still it all depends. Henry Clays, for instance, of last year's crop were splendid cigars. That reminds me of another point. The public fancy about names is very curious. For a long while Henry Clays were all the rage; it was the distinguished thing to ask for them. Then the makers began to trade on their reputation, and finally killed the goose that smoked the golden cigar. Now, Henry Clays are as fine as ever, but the public won't believe it."

"Which things are an allegory," I murmured. "I suppose there's a deal in fashion?"

"Oh, yes; look at Bocks. For years and years Bocks wouldn't go at all. Finally the proprietors formed a limited company and pushed their cigars very hard; and now wherever you go in the civilised world you are met by a Bock. Look at these, now; these cigars at three shillings and sixpence are put up in little glass tubes to preserve the flavour. Here's a better cigar at one shilling and ninepence. You see the consumer gladly pays as much for the glass tube as for the cigar. Fashion again! By-the-bye, I had two customers the other day who came in and bought two of these three shilling and sixpenny ones. It was pouring with rain at the moment. What did my gentlemen do but throw away the glass tubes, light up and walk off in the pouring rain, puffing at their beautiful cigars! Yes, they were very young."

"YOUNG MAN, I NEVER IN MY LIFE GAVE MORE THAN FOURPENCE, AND THAT'S MY TIMIE."

"And what, then, is to replace the Havana? I really don't know. Perhaps Mexicans—perhaps Borneos. No, not British, any way. *We* struggled for nearly twenty years to produce good home-made cigars, but we couldn't do it, partly because the Havana manufacturers were cute enough to prevent our getting anything but the refuse tobacco. We gave up the struggle four years ago. British-grown tobacco, did you say? No, thank you! I had one experience of that. An old gentleman who had a tobacco plantation off the Clapham Road—odd place—asked us to go and cure some for him. So my brother and I went. We dried it as well as we could in a greenhouse—the climate forbids it being done in the open—then we got a chopping-block and made him three cheroots; then we all solemnly lighted up. Oh Lord! I remember the taste yet. It was like smoking grass, liberally mixed up with hair—cow's or human's. A little went a long way. But the old gentleman went on puffing away, inhaling deep gusts of smoke, and crying, 'Isn't it heavenly? Hasn't it an aroma?' So it had; he was quite right there!"

"Now," I said, taking a Socratic attitude, "answer me one question more. The taste for cigars, you say, is chiefly acquired?"

"Certainly."

"Would it not be as easy to acquire a taste for bad cigars as for good ones?"

"I suppose it might."

"And the bad ones are much the cheaper?"

"Of course."

"Well, then!"

But the tobacconist didn't seem to see the force of my conclusion, and on reflection I don't know that I see it myself. That is the worst of the Socratic method: you can shut a man up with it, but I never heard that anything else came of it. Wherefore, let the interviewer beware; for I am afraid to return for many days to the only tobacconist in London. W. E. GARRETT FISHER

IF.

If I were you, the world were always bright,
The day would never close in darkening night;
I'd live, for ever, 'neath a cloudless sky,
My hope, my guide, the golden sun on high,
Whose rays must put all carking care to flight.

But when I see the sorrow and despite
That make this life a long-continued fight,
My courage sometimes fails me and I cry
"If I were you?"

And yet has fortune shed on you its light?
Has grievous wrong ne'er triumphed over right?
And have I cause to mourn that I am I?
Not so; for well I know, howe'er I sigh,
I would not see, or seeing, fear the blight,
If I were you.

J. M. BULLOCH.

ROYAL AND NOTABLE OAKS.

By GEORGE CLINCH.

THE oak's claim to sovereignty among the trees of the forest is as little likely to be questioned as that of the lion to kingship over the beasts. His sturdy majesty, his vigorous growth, and, above

PARLIAMENT OAK, CLIPSTONE PARK.

all, his length of days, combine to give him pre-eminence among his fellows. The oak has been lauded by authors from classical times downwards. Virgil sang his praises; and the remarkable fact of his longevity served to point a moral in the quaint lines of our own Chaucer—

> Lo the Oke! that hath so long a nourishing,
> Fro the time that it ginnith first to spring
> And hath so long a life, as we may see;
> Yet at the laste, wastid is the Tree.

The medicinal virtues of the oak, according to the old herbalists, appear to have been of no mean order. Culpeper, in speaking of the tree as "the glory and safety of this nation by sea," enumerates a series of sicknesses and disorders for which its sap, bark, leaves, and fruit were once considered to be a valuable antidote.

The groves of oaks were sacred among the Druids, and a large number of oak-trees throughout the kingdom, from their hoary antiquity, their supposed virtues, or some other circumstance, have come to be regarded with feelings of veneration and affection. An interesting class of famous oak-trees are those under whose branches primitive open-air assemblies or folk-moots were held. Trees of various species, like other natural objects, were well-known landmarks and convenient meeting-places, and this was particularly true of large and long-lived specimens, such as the ancient and broad-spreading oaks.

Sevenoaks, in Kent, and numerous other places whose names have been

CHARLES II. AND COLONEL CARLESS UNDER "THE ROYAL OAK," AT BOSCOBEL.

derived from the oak-tree, were probably so named after particular examples which were used as meeting-places or boundary-marks.

At Clipstone Park there was until quite lately a very old tree, locally known as the "Parliament Oak," and while a simple explanation of the name would seem to be discoverable in the fact that a parliament was held in this park by Edward I. in 1290, it is considered probable that the real origin is of a much earlier date, and that the event referred to was a revival, if not survival, of a very ancient custom.

Copt Oak, the place where the court of the lordship of Groby was held, was a fine old tree, with widely spreading branches. It was so called from the fact that the area around it was enclosed by a coped stone wall.

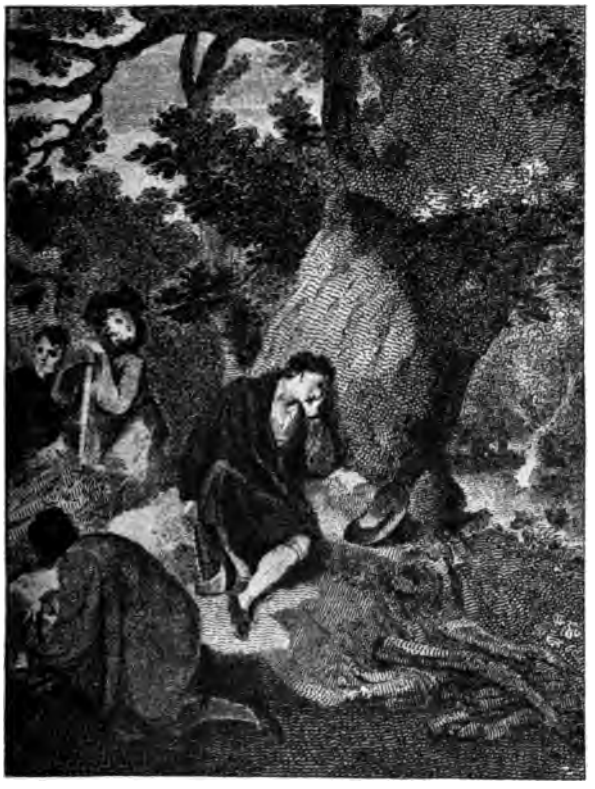
The origin of the name Berkshire, or, more correctly, Barkshire, described by Camden, is of great interest in this connection. "Berkshire," he says, "from Beroke, a disbarked oak, to which, when the State was in more than ordinary Danger, the inhabitants were wont in ancient Times to resort, and concert about public matters."

A similarly important "Shire Oak" once stood at the point where Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire, and Derbyshire meet. So remarkable was its size that its branches were capable of affording shelter to 230 horsemen. Another remarkable example of this sort of oak is the Crouch Oak at Addlestone, in Surrey, which once marked the boundary of Windsor Forest. Sherwood Forest was named after a fine old oak, or "shire oak," where the Nottingham moot was held.

It would be easy, if necessary, to give many instances of this kind which tend to show that the oak has been regarded with marks of respect from the dim past

WILLIAM PENDRILL AND THE ROYAL OAK.

of traditional history down to our own times, but it is, of course, well known that the event which has given it its chief claim to popularity in comparatively modern times, and one which has attached a special significance to the wearing of sprays of oak, was that in which it was closely associated with the chequered fortunes of a prominent member of the royal House of Stuart.



CHARLES II. DISGUISED AS A WOODMAN.

The tree which hid Charles II. from Cromwell's soldiers after the decisive defeat at Worcester in September 1651 was called "the Royal Oak," and nine years later, when the monarchy was once more established in these lands, and Charles rode triumphantly through the decorated streets into London, the oak was adopted as the symbol of the Royalist party with a sort of triumphant allusion to the perilous incident of Boscobel.

It was the young King's thirtieth birthday when he entered London, and the scene has been graphically outlined by Evelyn, who tells us that the King came "with a triumph of above 20,000 horse and foote, brandishing their swords and shouting with inexpressible joy; the wayes strew'd with flowers, the bells ringing, the streetes hung with tapissry, fountains running with wine; the Maior, Aldermen, and all the Companies in their liveries, chaines of gold and banners; Lords and Nobles clad in cloth of silver, gold, and velvet; the windowes and balconies all set with ladies; trumpets, music, and myriads of people flocking, even so far as from Rochester, so that they were seven houres in passing the citty, even from two in the afternoon till nine at night.

"I stood in the Strand and beheld it, and bless'd God. And all this was don without one drop of bloud shed, and by that very army which rebell'd against him; but it was the Lord's doing, for such a restauration was never mentioned in any history, antient or modern, since the returne of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity; nor so joyfull a day and so bright ever seene in this nation, this hapning when to expect or effect it was past all human policy."

The first anniversary appointed by Parliament to be observed as a day of general thanksgiving for the restoration of Charles II. was on May 29, 1665, and oak boughs and oak twigs were used to decorate the streets as well as for personal ornamentation upon every annual recurrence of the festival.

QUEEN ELIZABETH'S OAK, HUNTINGFIELD, SUFFOLK.

William Pendrill, who had assisted in hiding Charles II. among the Boscobel oaks, having died in London in 1671,

was buried in the churchyard of St. Giles-in-the-Fields, and it became a regular custom for many years to decorate his tomb with oak-boughs on this day. In fact, the wearing of oak-leaves and oak-apples, and the frequent use of oak-boughs in the decoration of the village street, grew throughout the country with a spontaneity and a rapidity which suggest that there was a general and deep-seated prejudice in favour of the oak.

THE GOSPEL OAK NEAR STONELEIGH, WARWICKSHIRE.

It is more than probable that "Restoration Day," or "Royal Oak Day," became to some extent confounded in the public mind with those festivities associated with May Day, which were so particularly marked by the use of greenery and floral decorations. One or two of the Royal Oak Day customs in various parts of the country are remarkably suggestive of May Day customs. In the neighbourhood of Starcross, in Devonshire, for instance, the children celebrate this anniversary by dressing up what they are pleased to call "May Babies." These are dolls, carefully and neatly dressed, decked with flowers and laid in boxes. The children carry these objects about for exhibition, just as the garlands are carried about on May Day. It is also a widespread custom to put branches of green oak over the cottage doors—a custom somewhat resembling the May-houses which were once familiar objects on our village-greens.

Some of the most remarkable of this series of customs in relation to their resemblance to the customs of May Day

FAIRLOP OAK, ESSEX.

are those which prevailed at Upton-upon-Severn, in Worcestershire. Early in the morning ropes were stretched across the street, upon which were hung garlands, composed of all such flowers as were in bloom. The garlands were also ornamented with coloured ribbons and handkerchiefs, and all available tea-spoons, and other bright objects. May-poles and oak-boughs were often used in the decoration of the streets, and gilded oak-apples were generally worn in the buttonhole.

The oak-tree seems to have been specially singled out and patronised by royalty. Queen Elizabeth's Oak at Huntingfield, in Suffolk, is, or perhaps was, one of a large class of forest-trees associated with the English sovereigns and named in honour of one or other of them. At the height of seven feet from the ground its trunk was eleven yards in circumference, and its age at the end of the last century is supposed to have been about five or six hundred years.

This fine old oak was situated in Lord Hunsdon's park, about two bow-shots from the old mansion-house where Queen Elizabeth is said to have been entertained by this nobleman and to have enjoyed the pleasures of the chase in a kind of rural majesty. The tradition is that the Queen shot a buck with her own hand from this, her favourite oak-tree.

Another oak associated with the times of Queen Elizabeth was Herne's Oak at Windsor. This tree, immortalised by Shakspere, stood on the south-east side of the Little Park of Windsor, and is said to have been named after a keeper of the forest named Herne, who lived in the time of Queen Elizabeth, and who, having been guilty of some offence for which he feared he might be discharged, hanged himself upon this tree. For many years a tradition lingered in the neighbourhood to the effect that Herne's ghost haunted the old tree; and Ainsworth has made use of this tradition in one of the most popular of his historical romances. Herne's Oak was long ago demolished, and when it was cut down, various tea-caddies and other small articles were made of its timber and sold to anyone of curious tastes who cared to purchase them.

Sir Philip Sidney's oak, at Penshurst, was so named from the fact that it was planted at the birth of that distinguished courtier. Ben Jonson sings of it as—

> That taller tree which of a nut was set
> At his great birth where all the Muses met.

And Waller and other poets have referred to the remarkable circumstances of its origin.

There is another interesting class of oak-trees well worthy of notice, on account of the evidence they afford as to ancient boundaries. They are called "Gospel Oaks." The custom of beating the boundaries of parishes once a year is still common in various parts of the kingdom. It is of great antiquity, and is supposed to have been derived from the feast called Terminalia—festivals dedicated in ancient days to the god Terminus—upon which occasion it was customary for peasants to assemble near the principal land-marks which separated their fields, and after they had crowned them with garlands and flowers, to make libations of milk and wine, and make a sacrifice of a lamb or young pig.

TWO OAK TREES, KNOWN AS "THE PORTERS," IN WELBECK PARK.

The beating of the bounds, therefore, must have been originally a religious ceremony, and some traces of a religious meaning have survived to our own times. Hence it was that boundary trees came to be known as gospel trees. Trees, and especially oaks of this class, are to be found in many different parts of the kingdom. They are plentiful about Wolverhampton, where the boundaries and township of the parish are marked by them, and they are preserved with the greatest care and attention. Other well-known specimens existed in

the north of London and near Stoneleigh, in Warwickshire.

Fairlop Oak, which has a distinct claim to be considered a famous tree, measured thirty-six feet in girth, and its branches covered an area three hundred feet in circumference. About the year 1728 Mr. Day, of Wapping, commenced the custom of dining under its branches every year with a party of his friends. So many others joined in this annual picnic that the gathering speedily assumed the character of a fair, and was held on the first Friday in July. When Mr. Day died, in 1767, his body was enclosed in a coffin made of wood taken from this tree.

Among oaks notable for size "The Porters," two magnificent oaks in Welbeck Park, are worthy of mention. Some years since one was above ninety-eight feet high, and the other was eighty-eight feet. There was once a gate between them, hence their name. "The Duke's Vant," in Savernake Forest, was another fine example. Its trunk measured thirty feet round on the outside, and twenty feet round the hollow within.

THE DUKE'S VANT (OR VAUNT), SAVERNAKE FOREST, WILTSHIRE.

A BOLD DESERTER.

By JOEL CHANDLER HARRIS.

I.

THE war wasn't much of a bother to Hillsborough, for the town was remote from the field of operations. Occasionally news would come that made the women cry out and the old men weep, but the intervals were long between these episodes, and to all appearances affairs moved forward as serenely as ever.

This was during the first year or two of the struggle. The came the impressment law, which created bad feelings and caused a good deal of grumbling. Following this came the Conscript Act, which made matters much worse, especially when strange men were sent to enforce it. This disturbed the serenity of Hillsborough very seriously.

Nevertheless, Hillsborough could have put up with the Conscript Act but for one event that stirred the little community from centre to circumference. The conscript officers had not been in the town a week before they pounced upon little Billy Cochran, the sole support of his widowed mother, who was known throughout that region as Aunt Sally. Little Billy himself was a puzzle to the more thoughtful people. He was so simple and innocent-minded, so ready to do for others what he wouldn't do for himself, that some said he was a half-wit, while others contended that he would have sense enough if his heart wasn't so big.

But everybody liked Little Billy—for his mother's sake, if not for his own, for Aunt Sally was, indeed, a Good Samaritan. She seemed to know by instinct where trouble and sickness and suffering were to be found, and there, too, she was to be found. High or low, rich or poor, she passed none by. And, though she was simple and as innocent-minded as Little Billy, these qualities seemed to fit her better than they did her awkward and bashful boy.

Aunt Sally and Little Billy were both as industrious as the day was long, yet they made but a precarious living on their little patch of ground—a bale or two of cotton that didn't bring a good price, and a little bit of garden truck which, with a few chickens and eggs, they brought to town occasionally in a ricketty one-horse wagon. Aunt Sally would take no pay for nursing the sick, no matter how much of her time was taken up, but she supplemented the meagre income they got from the one-horse farm by making quilts and counterpanes and bed-spreads, and by taking in weaving, being very expert at the loom.

As may be supposed, Aunt Sally and Little Billy didn't wear fine clothes nor put on any airs. Living in middle Georgia (the most democratic region, socially, in the world), they had no need for either the one or the other. They made a bare living and were tolerably satisfied with that.

One day, shortly after the conscript officer had established his headquarters in Hillsborough, Aunt Sally and Little Billy drove into town with a few dozen eggs and three or four chickens to sell. The conscript officer, sitting on the verandah of the tavern, noticed that Little Billy was a well-grown lad, and kept his eye on him as the ricketty one-horse wagon came through the public square.

There were two or three loungers sitting on the verandah, including Major Goolsby. One of them tapped the Major on the shoulder and pointed to Little Billy with his forefinger and the conscript officer with his thumb. The Major nodded gravely once or twice, and presently hitched his chair closer to the conscript officer.

"You ain't a-baggin' much game in these parts, I reckon," said the Major, addressing the officer, with half-closed eyes.

"Business is not very good," replied the other with a chuckle, "but we manage to pick up a few stragglers now and then. Yonder's a chap, now"—pointing to Little Billy—"that looks like he would be an ornament to the rearguard in an engagement." The officer was a big, rough-looking man, and seemed to find his present duties very agreeable.

"Do you mean little Billy Cochran?" inquired the Major.

"I don't know his name," said the officer. "I mean that chap riding in the chariot with the fat woman."

"That boy," remarked the Major, with an emphasis that caused the conscript officer to regard him with surprise, "is the sole support of his mother. He 's all she 's got to make her crop."

"Maybe so," the officer said, "but the law makes no provision for cases of that kind."

"You said *maybe* so," suggested the Major. "Do you mean to doubt my word?" His voice was as soft as the notes of a flute.

"Why, certainly not!" exclaimed the officer, flushing a little.

The Major made no further remark but sat bolt upright in his chair. The ricketty wagon drove to the tavern door and Little Billy got out, a basket of eggs in one hand and the chickens in the other. He went into the tavern, and while he was gone Aunt Sally passed the time of day with the Major and the rest of her acquaintances on the verandah.

Evidently Little Billy had no difficulty in disposing of his eggs and chickens, for he soon came out smiling. The officer arose as little Billy appeared at the door, and so did Major Goolsby. The loungers nudged one another in a gleeful way. As Little Billy came out, the conscript officer drew a formidable-looking memorandum-book from his pocket and tapped the young man on the shoulder. Little Billy looked around in surprise, the blood mounted to his face, and he laughed sheepishly.

"What is your name?" the officer asked, poising his pencil.

"William Henry Harrison Cochran," replied Little Billy.

"How old are you?"

"Twenty, April gone."

"Report at my office under the Temperance Hall next Wednesday morning, the day after to-morrow. The army needs your services."

"Do you want me to go to the war?" asked Little Billy, a quaver in his voice.

"Yes," the officer replied. "You fall under the conscript law."

"What 'll mammy do?"

"Really, I don't know. The Confederacy needs you worse than your mammy does just now."

Little Billy hung his head and walked to the ricketty wagon.

"Mind," said the officer. "Wednesday morning at ten o'clock. I don't want to send after you."

"Why, what in the round world is the matter, honey?" Aunt Sally inquired, seeing the downcast look of her son.

Little Billy simply shook his head. He could not have uttered a word then had his life depended on it.

"Git up, Beck!" exclaimed Aunt Sally, slapping her old mule with the rope reins.

Major Goolsby watched the mother and son for a few moments as they drove back across the public square. His lip quivered as he remembered how, years before, Aunt Sally had nursed his dead wife. He turned to the conscript officer and straightened himself up.

"Mister"—his voice was soft, sweet, and insinuating—"Mister, how many of your kind are loafing around in the South picking up the mainstay of widows?"

"As many as are necessary, Sir," replied the officer.

"As many as are necessary, Sir," said the Major, turning to his acquaintances and mimicking the tones of the officer. "Boys, that 's what they call statistics—the exact figures. Well, Sir, if there 's one for every town in the Confederacy there 's more than a regiment of 'em. Don't you reckon I 'm about right in my figures?"

"I couldn't say," replied the officer in an indifferent way. He saw that Major Goolsby was angry, but he didn't know what the Major's anger meant. "I couldn't say. If all of them have enlisted as many men as I have the army will be a great deal larger in the course of the next three months."

"Don't you think you could do a great deal more damage to the Yankees, if you had the will, than that boy you've just served notice on?" asked the Major, with a little more asperity than he had yet shown. "Why don't you get a basket and catch tomtits, and send 'em on to the front? The woods are full of 'em."

"Now, if you 'll tell me how all this concerns you," said the officer, bristling up, "I 'll be much obliged to you."

The Major took one step forward, and with a movement quick as lightning slapped the officer in the face with his open hand. "That 's for Little Billy!" he exclaimed.

The officer sprang back and placed his hand under his coat as if to draw a pistol. The Major whipped out a big morocco pocket-book, fumbled about it a moment, and threw five twenty-dollar gold pieces at the feet of the officer.

"I 'll send that to your family," he said, "if you 'll pull your pistol out where I can see it."

But the officer by this time had taken a sober second thought, and he turned away from the Major and went to his office across the public square. The older

citizens of Hillsborough applauded his coolness and discretion, and one of them told him confidentially that if he had drawn his pistol when Major Goolsby begged him to he would have been a dead man before he could have pulled the hammer back.

II.

Of course, everybody sympathised with Aunt Sally, and their sympathy added to her grief, for she was a tender-hearted woman. Moreover, when she found herself the object of so much condolence, she naturally concluded that her trouble was a great deal worse than she had any idea of, and she sat in her humble home and wept, and, like Rachel, refused to be comforted.

But the situation was not nearly so bad as Aunt Sally thought it was, or as Major Goolsby expected it would be. The Major himself sent her a little negro girl to keep her company, and the neighbours for miles around contended with one another in their efforts to make her comfortable. Not a day passed, except Sundays, that Miss Mary, the Major's daughter, didn't drive out to Aunt Sally's little place and spend an hour or two with her. Miss Mary was eighteen, as pretty as a peach, and as full of fun as an egg is of meat. She was a brunette with blue eyes, and although they were laughing eyes, they could look very sad and tender when occasion called for it.

She made herself very useful to Aunt Sally. She read to her the letters that Little Billy sent back from the camp of instruction at Loudersville, and answered them at Aunt Sally's dictation. In this way she came to feel that she knew Little Billy better than anyone else except his mother. She was surprised to find that, although Little Billy had had few advantages in the way of schooling, he could write a beautiful letter. She took the fact home to her innocent bosom and wondered how it could be that this country lad had the knack of putting himself into his letters along with so many other things that were interesting. She was touched, too, by the love for his mother that shone through every line he wrote. Over and over again he called her his dear mammy, and tried to comfort her, and sometimes he spoke of Miss Mary; and he was so deft in expressing his gratitude to her that the young lady blushed and trembled lest someone else was writing Little Billy's letters as she was writing his mother's.

And then, somehow, she never knew how, his face came back to her memory and planted itself in her mind and remained there. Little Billy was no longer the green, awkward, and ungainly country boy, peddling the scanty fruits of his poverty about the village, but a hero, who had no thought for anybody or anything except his dear old mammy.

As the cold weather came on, Little Billy wrote that he would feel a great deal more comfortable in the wind if he knew where he could get a thick suit of clothes and a heavy pair of shoes. But he begged his dear mammy not to worry about that, for he had no doubt the clothes and shoes would be forthcoming when he needed them most. Miss Mary skipped this part of the letter when she was reading it aloud to Aunt Sally, but it wasn't long before the clothes were made, with the aid and under the direction of Little Billy's mother; and the shoes were bought, costing Major Goolsby a pretty round sum in Confederate currency. Moreover, Miss Mary baked a fruit-cake with her own hands, and this was to be put in the box with the clothes and shoes.

The next thing was to find out if anybody from Hillsborough or from the countryside was going to the camp of instruction, where Little Billy's headquarters were. But right in the midst of expectation and preparation Aunt Sally fell ill. She had never reconciled herself to her separation from Little Billy. Until the conscript law tore him away from her side she had never been parted from him a day since the Lord sent him to her arms.

The strain was too much for the motherly heart to bear. Aunt Sally gradually pined away, though she tried hard to be cheerful, and at last, just before Little Billy's Christmas-box was to be sent, she took to her bed and lay there as helpless as a child. The doctor came and prescribed, but Little Billy was the only medicine that would do Aunt Sally any good. So she kept to her bed, growing weaker and weaker in spite of everything that the doctor and the neighbours could do.

At last, when an opportunity came to forward the box, Miss Mary wrote a note and pinned it where it could be seen the first thing. She began it with "Dear Little Billy," but this seemed too familiar, and she began it with "Mr. Cochran." She told him that his dear mammy was very ill, and if he wanted to see her he would do well to come home at once. It

was a very pretty letter, brief, simple and sympathetic.

This duty done, Miss Mary turned her attention to nursing Aunt Sally, and, except at night, was never absent from her bedside more than an hour at a time.

III.

When Little Billy arrived at the camp of instruction, the first person on whom his eye fell was Private Chadwick. Simultaneously the eye of Private Chadwick fell on Little Billy. Mr. Chadwick was something of a humorist in his way, and a rough one, as the raw conscripts found out to their cost. A heartless jest rose to his lips, but something in Little Billy's face—an expression of loneliness, perhaps—stayed it. In another moment Private Chadwick's hand fell on Little Billy's shoulder, and it was a friendly hand.

"Where from?" he asked.

"Close about Hillsborough," Little Billy answered.

"I reckon you know the Tripps and the Littles?"

"Mighty well," said Little Billy.

"What name?"

"Cochran."

"How old?"

"Twenty, last April gone."

"You don't look like you're fitten to do much soldierin'," suggested Private Chadwick.

"Oh, I'm tough!" said Little Billy, laughing, though he had a big lump in his throat.

"Come with me, Buddy," remarked the old soldier smiling. "If I'm ever to keep a tavern, I reckon I might as well begin with you as a boarder."

And so, for the time at least, Little Billy was installed in Private Chadwick's tent, much to the surprise of those who knew the peculiarities of the man. The camp was in charge of Captain Mosely, who was recovering from a wound, and he had selected his old comrade, Private Chadwick, as his drill-master — a curious selection it seemed to be to those who didn't know the man; but the truth was that Private Chadwick knew as much about tactics as any West Pointer, and had the knack, too, of imparting what he knew, even if he had to use his belt-strap to emphasise his remarks.

The upshot of the matter was that Little Billy went to Private Chadwick's tent and remained there. He and the private became inseparable companions when neither was on duty, and in these hours of leisure Little Billy learned as much about tactics as he did from the actual practice of drilling. He seemed to take to the business naturally, and far outstripped the men who had been drilling twice a day for three months. Naturally, therefore, Private Chadwick was very proud of his pupil, and frequently called Captain Mosely's attention to Little Billy's proficiency.

Over and often during the pleasant days of November Private Chadwick could be seen sitting in front of their tent engaged in earnest conversation, Little Billy leaning his face on his hands, and Private Chadwick making fantastic figures in the sand with the point of his bayonet. On such occasions Little Billy would be talking about his dear old mamma, and about Miss Mary, and, although Private Chadwick was something of a joker in his way, he never could see anything to laugh at in Little Billy's devotion to his mother or in his innocent regard for Miss Mary Goolsby. Somehow it carried the private back to his own boyhood days, and he listened to the lad with a sympathy that was as quick and as delicate as a woman's.

About the middle of December, Little Billy's box came. He carried it to Private Chadwick's tent in great glee, and opened it at once.

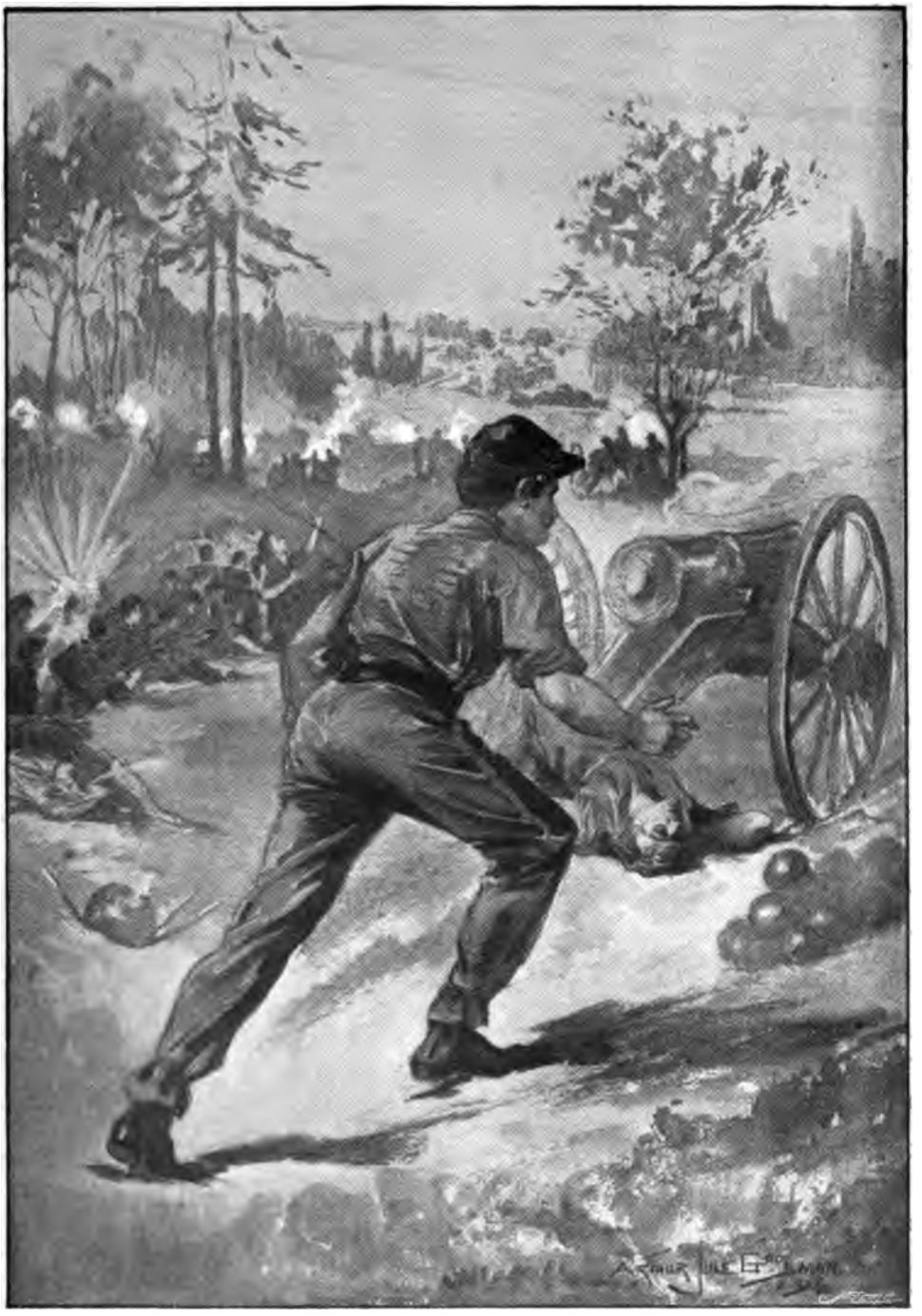
He had said to himself as he went along that he was sure there was something nice in the box, and he hoped to find Mr. Chadwick either in the tent or close by; but the drill-master was engaged just then in making a refractory conscript mark time in the guard tent by jabbing a bayonet at his toes.

So, for the moment, Little Billy had his precious box all to himself. He opened it and found the letter that Miss Mary had pinned to the clothes. It ran thus—

Mr. Cochran,—Aunt Sally is very ill now, and has been ill for some time. We are afraid that you are the only person in the world that can cure her. She is calling your name and talking about you all the time. It would do her so much good to see you that I hope you can make it convenient to come home very soon, if only for a day. We should all be so glad to see you. Your true friend,

MARY GOOLSBY.

Holding this letter in his hand, Little Billy sank down on a camp-stool and sat there. He forgot all about the box. He sat as still as a statue, and he was sitting thus when Private Chadwick came into the tent a half-hour later. Little Billy neither turned his head nor moved when the drill-master came in, snorting with rage and consigning all awkward recruits to places



HE NOW RAN, AS IF BY INSTINCT, TO THE GUN THAT HAD BEEN SILENCED.

too warm to be mentioned in polite conversation. But he pulled himself up when he saw Little Billy sitting on the camp-stool staring at vacancy.

"Hello!" he cried. "What kind of picnic is this? If my nose ain't gone and forgot her manners, I smell cake." He paused and looked at Little Billy. Seeing that the lad was troubled about something, he lowered his voice. "What's the matter, old man? If it's trouble, it'll do you more good to talk about it than to think about it."

For answer Little Billy held out the letter. Private Chadwick took it and began to read it. Then he held it close to his eyes.

"Now this is right down funny," he said, "and it's just like a gal. She's gone and scratched out the best part." Little Billy neither moved nor spoke, but turned inquiring eyes on his patron and friend. "She began it, 'Dear Little Billy,'" Private Chadwick continued, "and then she went and scratched it out."

It was a very fortunate stroke indeed. The colour slowly came back into Little Billy's face and stayed there. After Private Chadwick had read the letter Little Billy took it and gave it a careful inspection. His face was so full of colour at what he saw that a stranger would have said that he was blushing.

"What's to be done about it?" Private Chadwick asked.

"I must go home and see mammy," replied Little Billy.

Private Chadwick shook his head, and continued to shake it, as if by that means he would blot out the idea.

"Can I get a furlough?" Little Billy asked with tears in his voice.

If any other conscript had asked him this question, Private Chadwick would have used violent language, but the innocence and ignorance of Little Billy were dear to him.

"Now, whoever heard of the like of that?" he said in a kindly tone. "There ain't but one way for a conscript to leave this camp, and that is to desert."

"I'll do it!" exclaimed Little Billy.

"You know what that means, I reckon," said Private Chadwick dryly.

"It means that I'll see my dear mammy once more," replied Little Billy. "And after that I don't care what happens."

Private Chadwick looked at Little Billy long and hard, smiling under his moustache, and then went out. He walked to the centre of the encampment, where the flagpole stood. This inoffensive affair he struck hard with his fist, exclaiming under his breath: "Lord, Lord! What makes some people such big gizzards?"

The next day Little Billy was missing.

IV.

Captain Mosely had the camp searched, but without result, and in a little while everybody knew that the lad was a deserter. During the morning, Private Chadwick had a long talk with Captain Mosely, and the result of it was that no immediate arrangements were made to send a guard after Little Billy.

Meanwhile, Aunt Sally was growing weaker and weaker. Sometimes in her troubled dreams she imagined that Little Billy had come, and at such moments she would cry out a glad welcome, and laugh as heartily as ever. But, for the most part, she knew that he was still absent, and that all her dreams were futile and fleeting.

Nevertheless, one bright morning in the latter part of December, Little Billy walked into his mother's humble home weary and footsore. Aunt Sally heard his footsteps on the door-sill, and, weak as she was, sat up in bed and held out her arms to him. Her dreams had come true, but they had come true too late. When Little Billy removed the support of his arms, in order to look at his dear mammy's face, she was dead. The joy of meeting her son again was too much for the faithful and tender heart.

All that could be done by kind hearts and willing hands was done by Miss Mary and the neighbours. Little Billy shed no tears. The shock had benumbed all his faculties. He went about in a dazed condition. But when, the day after the funeral, he went to tell Miss Mary good-bye, the ineffable pity that shone in her face touched the source of his grief, and he fell to weeping as he had never wept before. He would have kissed her hand, but she drew it away, and, as he straightened himself, tiptoed and kissed him on the forehead. With that she too fell to weeping, and thus they parted. But for many a long day Little Billy felt the pressure of soft and rosy lips on his forehead.

He sold the old mule that had served his dear mammy so faithfully, and this gave him sufficient money to pay his way back to camp on the railroad, with some dollars to spare. As good fortune would have it, the first man he saw when the

train stopped at the station nearest the camp was Private Chadwick. Little Billy spoke to his friend with as much cheerfulness as he could command.

"I 'm mighty glad to see you, old man," said Chadwick, "I knowed in season that you was certain to come back—and, sure enough, here you are. You've had trouble, too. Well, trouble has got a long run and a hard hand, and I ain't never saw the livin' human bein' that could get away from it when it begins to feel around for 'em."

"Yes," replied Little Billy simply; "I 'll never have any more trouble like that I've had."

"It's mighty hard at first always," remarked Private Chadwick, with a sigh, "but it's mighty seasonin'. The man that ain't the better for it in the long run ain't much of a man. That's the way I put it down."

"Am I a deserter, sure enough?" asked Little Billy, suddenly remembering his position.

"Well, it's a mixed case," answered the private. "You've gone and broke the rules and articles of war—I reckon that's what they call 'em. You took Dutch leave. The Cap said if you didn't come back in ten days he 'd send a file of men after you, and then your cake would 'a' been all dough. But now you've come back of your own free will, and the case is mixed. You are bound to be arrested. All that's been fixed, and that's the reason I've been comin' to train every day sence you've been gone. I wanted to arrest you myself."

"Then I 'm a prisoner," suggested Little Billy.

"That's about the size and shape of it," replied Private Chadwick.

His tone was so emphatic that Little Billy looked at him. But there was a kindly light in the private's eyes and a pleasant smile lurking under his moustache: so that the young fellow thought he might safely go back to his grief again.

When they arrived at camp Private Chadwick, with a great show of fierce formality, led Little Billy to the guard-tent, and there placed him in charge of a newly made corporal, who knew so little of his duties that he went inside the tent, placed his gun on the ground, and had a long familiar chat with the prisoner.

After the camp had gone to bed Private Chadwick relieved the guard, and carried Little Billy to his own tent, where Captain Mosely was waiting.

This rough old soldier gave Little Billy a lecture that was the more severe because it was delivered in a kindly tone. At the end he informed Little Billy that the next day a squad of picked men from the conscript camp was to go to the front in charge of Private Chadwick, the enemy having shown a purpose to make a winter campaign.

"Would you like to go?" the Captain asked.

Little Billy seized the Captain's arm. "Don't fool me!" he cried. "If I 'm fit to go, let me go. That's what I'm longing for."

The Captain felt about in the dark for Little Billy's hand, and grasped it. "You shall go," he said, and walked from the dark tent into the starlight outside.

The nights are long to those who sleep with sorrow, but, after all, the days come quickly, as Little Billy soon found out. The next morning he found himself whirling away to Virginia, where some cruel business was on foot. The days went fast enough then, and the railway train, with its load of soldiers, puffed and snorted as if it wanted to go faster, too; but it went fast enough—just fast enough to be switched off to the right of Richmond and plunge its load of conscripts and raw recruits unprepared into a furious battle that had just reached the high tide of destruction. Private Chadwick was swept along with the rest, and he tried hard to keep his eye on Little Billy, but found it impossible, since they were soon mixed with men who were wounded, and with men who were running away. Some of the latter turned again when they saw the reinforcements rushing forward pell-mell.

Little Billy was far in front of the others. He heard the crackle of musketry and the thunder of the cannon, and ran toward the smoke and confusion. A shell dropped in front of him and spun around, spitting fire, but he ran on, and never even heard the explosion that shattered the trees around, and played havoc with the reinforcements that were following. He jumped over men that were lying on the ground, whether dead or wounded he never knew. Someone, apparently in command, yelled at him with a savage curse, but he paid no attention to it. Directly in front of him he saw a battery of three guns. Two were in action, but one had no one to manage it. On each side of this battery, and a little to the rear, the line of battle stretched away.

Seeing Little Billy running forward, followed by the recruits from the train, the line of battle began to cheer, and at the same time to advance. He had practised

with an old six-pounder at the conscript camp, and he now ran, as if by instinct, to the gun that had been silenced. The Confederates charged, but had to fall back again, and then they began to retire, slowly at first, and then with some haste. Little Billy paid no attention to this movement at all. He continued to serve his gun and fire it as rapidly as he could. Shot and shell from the Federal batteries ploughed up the ground around him, but never touched him. Presently a tall man with a long brown beard rode out of the smoke and ordered Little Billy to retreat, pointing as he did so to the bristling line of Federals charging up the hill.

NOTHING WOULD DO BUT HE MUST FIGHT HIS BATTLES OVER AGAIN.

"Take hold of my stirrup," said the tall man. He spurred his horse into a rapid trot, and Little Billy trotted by his side, mightily helped by holding on to the stirrup. In this way they were soon out of it, and in a little while had caught up with the main body, which had planted itself a couple of miles farther back, while the brigade in which Little Billy had fought was holding the enemy at bay.

Little Billy's face was black with powder, but his eyes shone like stars. He knew now that never again would danger or the fear of death cause him to flinch.

"What regiment do you belong to?" asked the tall man as they went along.

"None," replied Little Billy simply. Then he told how he was just from a conscript camp in Georgia. When they arrived at the Confederate position the tall man called to an officer.

"This is my rearguard," said he. "See that he is cared for." Then to Little Billy: "When this affair blows over, brush up and call on General Zeb Stuart. He needs a courier, and you are the man."

As there was no sign of a fight the next day, Little Billy went to General Stuart's headquarters and was ushered in. That famous fighter, who happened to be the officer who had noticed him the day before, took him by the arm and introduced him to his staff, and told how he had found him serving a gun, after the entire brigade had begun to retreat.

This was the beginning. Little Billy became a courier, then an aid, and when the war closed he was in command of a regiment. His recklessness as a fighter had given a sort of romantic colour to his name, so that the newspaper correspondents found nothing more popular than some anecdote about Colonel Cochran.

His fame had preceded him to Hillsborough, and he had a queer feeling when the older citizens, men who had once awed him by their pride and their fine presence, took off their hats as they greeted him. The most demonstrative among those was Major Goolsby.

"You are to come right to my house, Colonel. You belong to us, you know." This was Major Goolsby's greeting, as he clung to Colonel Cochran's hand. "It will be a great surprise to Mary. She'll never know you in the round world. Why, you've grown to be a six-footer."

So there was nothing for Colonel Cochran to do but to go to the Goolsby place, a fine house built on a hill beyond the old church. The Major wanted to give his daughter a surprise, and so he carried Colonel Cochran into the parlour, and then told Miss Mary that one of her friends had called to see her.

The young lady went skipping into the parlour, and then paused, with a frightened air, as she saw a six-foot man in faded uniform rise to meet her.

"Miss Mary," said Colonel Cochran, holding out his hand.

"Are you——" She paused, grew white, and then red, and suddenly turned and ran out of the room, nearly upsetting the Major, who was standing near the door.

"Why, what on earth's the matter?" he cried. "Well, if this don't beat—did she know you, Colonel?"

"I'm afraid she did," replied the Colonel grimly.

The Major tiptoed to his daughter's room, opened the door softly, and found her on her knees by her bed, crying. Thereupon he tiptoed back again and said to Colonel Cochran, "It's all right. She's crying."

The Colonel smiled dryly. "If I make the women cry, what will the children do when they see me?"

The Major laid his hand affectionately on Cochran's arm. "Don't you fret," he said. "Just wait."

And so wonderful are the ways of women, that when Miss Mary came out again she greeted the Colonel cordially, and was as gay as a lark. And nothing would do but he must fight his battles over again, which he did with great spirit when he saw her fine eyes kindling with enthusiasm, and her lips tremble from sheer sympathy.

Strange to say, nobody knew what it all meant but the old cook, who stood in the doorway leading from the dining-room to the kitchen and watched her young mistress. She went back in the kitchen and said to her husband—

"Ef you want ter see how folks does when dey er in love, go ter de door dar an' look at dat 'ar chile er our'n."

The old man looked in, watched Miss Mary a moment, and then looked hard at Colonel Cochran.

"I dunno so much 'bout de gal," he said, when he went back, "but dat 'ar man got mo' in his eye dan what his tongue want ter tell."

And it was so; and, being so, the whole story is told.

Sumer is icumen in, Lhude sing Cuccu
Groweth sed and bloweth med and springth the wode nu.
Sing Cuccu.
Ewe bleteth after lomb and after calve cow
Bulluc sterteth,
Bucke verteth,
Murie sing Cuccu.
Cuccu, Cuccu.
Wel singes thu Cuccu
Nor cease thu never nu.
Old English Song
C. HENTSCHEL Sc.

AN · EVENING · WITH · HODGE

By MARY HARTIER.

IT was a November night, and the road over Fuzzamoor was ankle-deep in mud. A fine drizzle was falling, and there did not seem any sign that it would clear. The moor was as bleak and barren a spot as could be found in the West Country, and yet in the summer sunshine, when all the land flamed with the yellow furze and flushed with the purple heather, it had a rare beauty of its own. Away in the distance a break in the hills would show the sea stretched fair and calm against a cloud-flecked sky. But all this was blotted out, and a weary traveller would be conscious of nothing but mud and mist. In one place the road dipped down, rising as suddenly to a greater height on the other side, and at the lowest point of the hollow stood the Foxhunter's Inn, the central attraction of the straggling hamlet of Fuzzacott.

The guests in the inn-parlour were oblivious to the discomfort that reigned outside. It did not seem an occasion that demanded undue hilarity, hard drinking, or the exercise of wit. They were sleepy folk in Fuzzacott, and they took their pleasures sedately. Besides, Sarah Pat, the landlady, was not a woman to be trifled with; and her customers knew that excess of any kind, whether in drinking or discussion, would not be tolerated. And as there was no rival inn, not a man in the place would run the risk of incurring Sarah Pat's displeasure, and thus of losing the society that her house afforded. For it was undoubtedly the social instinct that brought these men together. One labourer may have been working in absolute solitude the whole day in a ditch, perhaps, till the mud and clay and water would gradually penetrate the thickest covering and strike a chill to his very bones. And the small tenant-farmers worked hard enough, and might often be seen getting in their roots or guiding their plough over the brow of the hill where the north-west gales cut like a knife and the hailstorms beat down pitilessly. But, whatever the men's occupation on this particular day, it had probably been incessant and monotonous, and the mere fact of foregathering with their fellow-creatures, smoking their pipes and drinking their beer in company, gave them a solid sense of comfort. The evening, as a rule, began with great solemnity. The same remarks were expressed time after time, only varying so far as it might be "vine" or "turrabul" weather for the hay, "wets" (oats), "whayte," "turmits," or "rütes." As the inner man became refreshed with draughts of home-brewed ale tongues wagged more freely, until at length the genial atmosphere of the place called forth some jokes of a respectable age and even a song if Tom Gribble or Farmer Smale happened to be in good voice.

Sarah Pat seemed on this evening in a state of suppressed excitement. Her voluminous skirts swung round with such rapid jerks that Bill Mock and Zebedee Zeale tucked their legs under the bench they were sitting on to get them out of the way. She had on her best cap, and the

black and white lace bristled round her ample countenance, while the lavender ribbons flew out with each active movement as if they were in a gale.

"What's up wi' the 'awld dumman," whispered Zebedee to his neighbour.

Sarah's ears were sharp.

"Aw, yü men! Yü be so curyous as a passel o' women," she said. "There bean't nothin' out of the ordinary the matter with me, except that I've got a young woman come to bide with me for two or dree days. I shouldn't wonder if 'er com'th in yer vor help me a bit, vor 'er's turrabul handy in her ways, so mind yü men behave vitty before 'er; I shouldn't like 'er tü be put out wi' our countrified manners, livin' as 'er does in a gert place where they keep more servants than I can well count."

"What would 'er be now—high up in sarvice, or just a tweeny-maid?" hazarded one of the younger men.

"Never yü mind what 'er be, Dan Mitchell. Yü 've a-got one maiden to keep company with, so don't 'ee go vor be casting sheep's-eyes at no others."

Dan was quenched, but revived quickly when Sarah's young friend appeared in the doorway. She carried a tray filled with some pewter pint mugs that had just been washed and polished, and a few clay pipes to replenish the rack beside the hearth-place. Two candles in tall brass candlesticks were on the tray, and the light from them revealed the girl to the solemn gaze of about a dozen pairs of eyes. It was a merry face, not exactly pretty, but very winsome, with a suggestion of piquancy and originality. The most striking thing about her was her intense vitality. She seemed brimming over with energy, which showed itself in the spring of her movements—the quick glance of her bright eyes passing from one to another of the guests, and leaving even upon those stolid natures the sensation of an electric shock—and in the way she dominated Sarah Pat, who on other occasions was accustomed to rule supreme in her rightful kingdom.

"Molly, my dear, dü'ee go and put on one o' my apurns. I can't abide 'ee vor mess up that tidy gown with old kitchen work," said Sarah, but her tone was apologetic rather than commanding.

"Aw! Mrs. Pat, how jealous yü be tü be sure! I'll tell 'ee what 'tis," said Molly addressing the guests: "'er can't bear me vor cut 'er out, though there bean't much chance o' that when 'er's got 'er best cap on, dü'ee think so, measters?" And she danced out of the room with no intention of covering the glories of her bright pink blouse and neat serge skirt with one of the landlady's ample aprons.

"How pert the maidens be nowadays, tü be sure!" remarked Farmer Smale.

"'Er com'th from these parts, I can tell from the tongue of 'er," said Zebedee Zeale.

"Don't yü be under no mistake, Zebedee. 'Er can put on a fine enough manner of sayin' 'er words when 'er tells tü the quality, but 'tisn't likely as 'er 'd take the trouble vor talk vitty tü a passel o' gert buffelheads like yü be," retorted Mrs. Pat.

"No offence, Missus," returned Zebedee, "I was glad vor see that such a fine young woman could be so pleasant in 'er ways."

Molly came back at that moment with a tray of the best china, which she began to put away in the corner cupboard. A riding party had stopped at The Fox-hunter's in the afternoon for tea, and that necessitated bringing out the best linen, plate, and china, for Sarah Pat lived far enough out of the world to take a pride in doing her very best for her customers. Molly dragged forward a cricket, or three-legged stool, and mounted it in order to reach the top shelf of the cupboard and arrange its crowning glory of six silver spoons each in a tall punch-tumbler. The trim figure balanced itself cleverly on the rickety stool, and Molly was so engrossed in her care of the thin-stemmed glasses that she did not notice the slight commotion caused by the entrance of a belated traveller. The stranger looked with approval on the cosy scene before him, and contrasted it with the discomfort of the last few hours' tramp through the mud and mist of an unknown region. The logs burned brightly on the open hearth. Through the slight haze caused by the devotion of the majority to their clay pipes the faces of the men loomed indistinctly—some round and ruddy, others lined and seamed with age and toil. And the girlish figure poised lightly on the stool in the corner added a bright touch to the sombre scene. It was so lithe and supple in comparison with those bent, thickset forms, robbed of all their elasticity by the wear and tear of work and weather. Molly turned, and, seeing the stranger, hopped off her perch, dropped a demure little curtsey and vanished.

Mrs. Pat's instinct of hospitality began to assert itself.

"Git along furder, Joe Dummett, and let the genelman come vore and dry hisself," she said, inviting the stranger to

SARAH'S YOUNG FRIEND CARRIED A TRAY.

take the corner of the settle nearest the fire. "My! Zir, yü be properly wet tü be sure. This yer mizzle dü go drü a body's clothes most so bad as downright rain. Now, if so be yü wouldn't think it tü be demeaning of yerself tü wear my measter's Sunday coat and a pair of his worsted stockings while your own be drying yü 'd be a sight more caumforable. My measter, he's tü sea now, but he never takes no count of what I dü wi' his things when he's away, though he's a bit itemy when he's about the place hisself."

"It's very kind of you to take so much trouble," said the stranger gratefully. "You must manage to put me up for the night too, as I lost my way in the fog over Fuzzamoor, and I don't feel inclined to turn out from these comfortable quarters, and perhaps miss the road again before I reach Torcombe."

"Well, Zir, I 'll dü what I can vor 'ee, I 'm sure," and she took up a candle to show the stranger to the low-roofed room, which was the only accommodation she could provide for him.

In the meantime Molly was making friends with the guests in the parlour.

"I 've heard tell as how yü can sing a very good song," she said to Farmer Smale.

The farmer looked overcome with confusion, but mightily pleased for all that. After several gurgling chuckles he found sufficient voice to answer: "Aw, now! Have 'ee sure? Wull! I dü manage tü tuney up a bit wan time and another. But yü can't be yurd to advantage in a low-pitched room like thease yer. Now, if yü was vor come to church Zunday I 'd sing out proper and let 'ee have a taste o' the trü quality o' my voice."

"But I can't bide yer awver Sunday," said Molly. "I must be back in my place afore that."

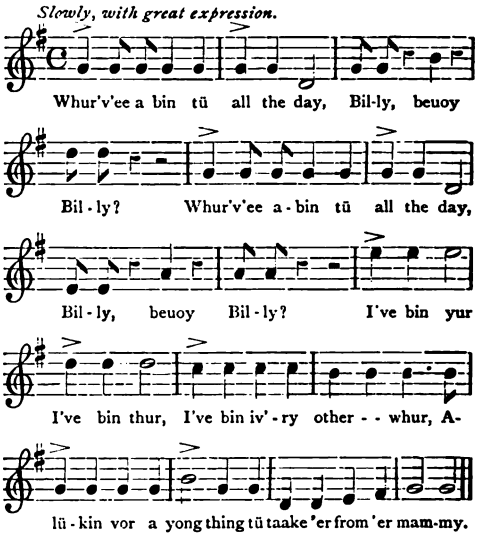
"Couldn't 'ee give the young woman a bit of a song just vor pacify 'er?" suggested Tom Gribble. "'The Exciseman,' now, 'ath a-got a güde rattling tune."

"I be troubled wi' such a hose in my throat, Tom, that I can scarce quilty [swallow], let alone sing drü twenty-vower verses. But there's a little bit of a ditty I can mind so long as I can mind anything. 'Tis only dree verses o' un as I knaw, but I dü zim he had more wan time."

"'Ot's un called?" asked Tom.

"I don't rightly knaw as he's called anything," answered Farmer Smale. "When you 've a-yurd 'un yü can christen 'un yerself."

Before the song began the stranger entered, clad in a pair of white ducks and a baggy short coat of dark blue cloth, such as old sailors love to wear on Sundays. His appearance overcame Molly altogether. She was perched at the edge of a high oak chest, but after the first half-stifled burst of merriment she recovered quickly and fixed her whole regard on the singer. The stranger took up his position a little behind her and paid as much attention to her countenance as she did to Farmer Smale's, whereby he lost the full effect of the song. The good farmer fastened his gaze upon the hams that were hanging to the rafters, and, with his most funereal expression, helped on by an occasional shake of the head, he sang the following dirge-like ditty—



"Can 'er baake and can 'er brew,
Billy, beuoy Billy?
Can 'er make a Hirish stew,
Billy, beuoy Billy?
'Er can baake, 'er can brew,
'Er can make a Hirish stew,
But 'er be a yong thing tü taake 'er from 'er mammy.

"How awld be 'er then,
Billy, beuoy Billy?
How awld be 'er then,
Billy, beuoy Billy?
Twaice zix, twaice zebban,
Twaice twanty and eleben,
Yet 'er be a yong thing tü taake 'er from 'er mammy."

This song met with some applause. Molly swayed backwards and forwards in uncontrollable mirth. It was a relief to be able to laugh openly at something, after the apparition of the handsome stranger in Cap'n Pat's Sunday attire; and the song

given with such imperturbable gravity was really very funny.

The men were less moved to mirth, having had the privilege of listening to the song several scores of times before.

"I bean't much of a hand at figures, but I can't make out as 'er was too yong vor be married, after all," remarked a dull-looking youth in the window-seat.

"Aw, thee gert gapshly!" retorted Farmer Smale. "Why, don't 'ee zee they 'm a-makin' fun of the woman?"

"I don't zee no fun in tellin' lies," muttered the youth sullenly.

"'Tis no manner o' use to maake a joke avoore he," said Farmer Smale. "He's a most turrubal literary chap." (The farmer meant 'literal,' but it was quite near enough for his hearers, who allowed their ears to be pleasantly tickled with his occasional long words without troubling their intellects to absorb them.)

"There's been more than one güde joke made here avoore now," remarked Zebedee Zeale, trying not to look conscious that he was leading up to his own masterpiece in that line.

"Iss fy! Zebedee, and if I remember rightly, yü said something smart yerself wance," said a neighbour, who had no paltry feelings of jealousy and was willing to help him on.

"Aw! yü 've all heard thiccy joke times enough," answered Zebedee coyly.

"Wull, I reckon us 'll have to stand hearing 'n a time or two more, and with the genelman and the young woman yer 'tis a chance yü mightn't get again in a hurry."

"Let me zee! 'Twas about the beer, wasn't 'er?"

"Git on, measter," said Farmer Smale. "Yü shouldn't never keep the ladies waitin'."

Zebedee beamed.

"Wull," he said, "us was remarkin' that t'was an uncommon güde brew as us got tü drink yer."

"'Er can baake and 'er can brew," sang Molly softly.

"And then I up and I sez, sez I: 'Iss fy! 'Tis a very güde tap yü 'll find tü The Foxhunter's whichever way yü dü turn 'un.'"

Molly was again shaken with laughter, and the stranger's rare smile came and stayed.

Zebedee looked delighted with the effect of his wit. Farmer Smale was a little put out that the laughter came before he had expounded the joke, as it generally followed his share of the entertainment. However, they should not go without the explanation, though their mirth was untimely.

"'Tis a joke upon our landlady's name, Zir, and Zebedee dü mane that 'er's as güde as 'er tap, and her tap's as güde as 'er. Turn 'tap' backsivore and he makes 'Pat.' Aw! 'tis a joke us 'ave laughed at

FARMER SMALE SANG A DIRGE-LIKE DITTY.

many a time, and Zebedee, he made a mark by 'un that he won't lose in a hurry."

"'Tis a trü joke, too," said Bill Mock. "If I dü feel a bit out o' soarts I can make use of a drop of Mrs. Pat's home-brewed better 'n I can make use of anything. It sort o' lies plim on the stomach, it dü."

At this moment Mrs. Pat bustled in, and said to the stranger, "If you please, Sir, I've got supper ready vor 'ee in the best parlour, and I've put in a bit of fire, as I reckon you'll like to sit there after and smoke a pipe."

"Thank you, Mrs. Pat. I shall be glad of some supper, but I shall come back to this comfortable corner for my pipe, if I may. I can't hear Farmer Smale's songs in the best parlour."

"No, nor yü can't go staring at pretty maidens in the best parlour," said Sarah to herself.

"Hadn't 'ee better taake yer knitting out by the kitchen fire while I'm lükin' after the gentleman?" whispered Mrs. Pat to Molly.

"Oh, I'm all right," the girl said. "I'll just rin back and forth with the logs of wood they'll be wanting here presently."

"I don't like leavin' 'ee, but I sha'n't be long," and the old lady departed.

Molly was raking the wood ashes together before putting on fresh fuel when she heard a newcomer enter. She looked up and saw a man standing in the doorway with a dazed expression on his face, and, indeed, the blaze from the logs must have been dazzling after the gloom outside. Presently he spoke in a hoarse whisper—

"Missus is gawne!"

"When?" asked a voice from a dark corner.

"Now."

"How awld was 'er?"

"Zixty-vower."

"Poor dear heart! Come vore, man, and 'ave a drop o' güde beer vor wash down the grief."

The bereaved husband accepted the invitation. He drank the beer which Molly brought for him in solemn silence. For five minutes not a word was spoken. Then a sense of the sympathy of his companions stole upon the man.

"'Er was the cleverest hand at nattlings and bliddy puddens I ever comed across."

"And turrabul kind 'er was, too, in sending a neighbour a bit of pork when 'er killed a peg," remarked another voice from a dark corner. It was only those whose countenances were not seen who had enough courage to express their sympathy.

Another long pause.

"Wull! I'll be getting home-along now," and he went. And let no one think he went back to his desolate home without the comfort he had sought in his dim way among his fellow-labourers. Few words were spoken, and those not of a kind to recommend themselves as the highest type of condolence, yet in what way superior are the most eloquent and refined phrases at such a time? If the spirit of sympathy is abroad, pig-killing may be as comforting a subject as angels, and certainly it was more intelligible in the present case.

After the departure of the newly made widower, the guests were much subdued. Mrs. Pat came in and bewailed the loss of a kind neighbour. The stranger soon followed, and took his place in the corner of the settle. Then the talk wandered round to the cause of the woman's death.

"'Er puzzled Doctor, I'm thinking," said the landlady. "He couldn't find out no reason why 'er should fall right away like. The poor dear soul got more and more weist-lookin' till at last 'er was a proper rames. Then he said 'twas the consumption, but Joanna Pick hadn't got no more consumption about 'er than I have."

"What dü 'ee think the disayse was, then, Missus?" inquired one of the men.

"'Tisn't always disayses that folks die of," answered Sarah.

"Yü don't think 'er was awverlüked, dü 'ee?" asked Zebedee in an awed whisper.

'Tisn't vor me to say as 'er was or 'er wasn't," was the unsatisfactory answer; "but I dü zim as 'twas very strange the Picks should have had such a run of bad luck. Dü 'ee mind last year how they lost a fine bullock? What should *he** 'a' died for if somebody hadn't been begridging the Picks and wishing 'em evil? And then they got swine-fever and had to kill all their pegs, and the awverseer come down upon 'em with a proper old fuss about whitewashing and such like tü get the rids of infection. White witches would 'a' bin more tü the purpose than white-washing, I'm thinkin'."

"I did hear tell as how George Pick went tü Exeter vor consult the White Witch," remarked one.

"I heard so, too," said Sarah, "but I never inquired intü it, vor I won't have no dalins' with such things. And if us get tellin' up old witch stories I shan't get a wink of sleep this blessed night. Lük 'ee yer, Tom Gribble, as us be on the subject of poor folk that 'ave lost their wives, yü tell how you lost yours and found 'er again."

Tom, being thus suddenly called upon, looked rather alarmed, but he did not dream of questioning his landlady's command. He took his pipe reluctantly out of his mouth, and began at once.

* In Devonshire everything is *he*, except a tom-cat.

"Yü all know, neighbours (though seein' the young maiden and the genelman be furrin', perhaps they don't), that after I was married I was took a bit queer-like in my head. Whether 'twas from having a woman always jiggiting about the place, and hearing so much chitter-chatter when I 'd been used to bide quiet, I can't tell 'ee. Anyways, I began vor to have buzzin' noises in my ears, and tü see things what they tell me never took place (though I've got my own notions about that), and the queerest maggot of all I got into my head was that my wive wanted to murder me. Then I thinks tü myself that there's two can play at that game, so I was continually turnin' awver in my mind how I could kill her first. 'Twasn't all the time I felt like that, but I never knawed when the fit would sayse hold on me. Wull! Albertina—that's my wive—'er got most out of patience at last. I 'd say tü 'er between times when I was all right: 'My dear wive, I be proper fond of 'ee; don't 'ee go vor tü take no notice of what I say when I beant myself.' And Albertina, 'er rapped out: 'Take no notice, indeed! A pretty pass I should come to then! As like as not I should find myself lyin' on the hearth with my brains all a-blawed out. I 'll tell 'ee what 'tis, Tom Gribble, the next time yü begin vor tü take old items into your head off I go. I can earn my own livin' and I won't be beholden tü a man what thinks I want to murder 'un.'

"Wull, the fit come on again, and sure enough 'er went. The place did zim lonesome and quiet-like without Albertina. My old aunt that lives out Torcombe way came and did vor me, but I couldn't abear tü see 'er slewchin' round where my missus used tü go dapping about so peart's a bird. Times I wrote and axed 'er to come back, vor I felt certain I was properly cured. I didn't feel no call to murder my aunt, and I'm sure that might have been excusable, vor 'er was a most cantankerous old twoad. But Albertina never took no notice of my letters, though I was reckoned to write a very good hand. Then I got desperate and thought I 'd go and have a word with 'er. So I harnessed th' awld mare in the spring-cart and off I went tü Yard where 'er had hired 'erself as servant. 'Twas getting on vor the dimmits, and I hitched up the mare and went vore tü the back entrance. As I passed the kitchen winder I seed Albertina sitting there all alone, because 'er master and missus was well-to-do, and sat in the parlour evenings; and I zim tü go all of a treemor like. Then I unasped the door and I said, 'Wull, my dear, how be 'ee?' and my wife 'er lüked up startled like and rapped out, 'None the better vor seein' yü.' That wasn't what yü might call encouraging, but I knawed the ways of 'er, and I seed that 'er breath come short, and 'er dropped the stitches of 'er knitting. So I went vore and sat down alongside of 'er and says, 'My dear wive, 'tis cruel weist without 'ee. Won't 'ee forgive me and come back again?'

"'No, Tom Gribble, I won't,' 'er says. 'I knaws when I 'm well off.'

"'Yü knaws more than I dü, then,' I said. 'I don't call it being well off tü serve other folks and live in a strange 'ouze, and be called *Jaane*, when yü might 'ave a nice little home of yer own, and a sarvant-maid to help 'ee, and be called *Albertina*. And I 'm sure I be cured. I never want tü murder Mother Prance, and 'ers a deal more trying than ever yü was.'

"Wull! I talked to that woman vor the best part of a hour, and 'er wouldn't listen tü rayson. Then I got up vor go, and I says, 'Goodbye, then, my dear wive, and God bless 'ee. I don't suppose yü'll have to bide in sarvice long. I've got a tidy bit of money laid by, and I've put 'ee down for it all, and I don't zim I shall last out the year. I went tü doctor last week, and he telled me one lung's ago and t'other's a-tiched, so I sha'n't keep 'ee out of yer nice little home much longer.' Then I walked away, and as I passed the winder I seed 'er was cryin' fit tü break 'er heart. So I called out, 'What's the matter, my dear?' and 'er says, 'Aw! nothin', only I reckon I must come and lüke after 'ee.' And 'er came; and that were a matter of twenty year agone."

"How about yer lungs that was a-tiched?" suggested Zebedee.

"I shouldn't wonder if 'twasn't the onaisiness of my mind that was a-preyin' on 'em," said Tom. "They didn't give me much trouble after Albertina came back. My dear Sose! why, 'tis close upon ten o'clock. Us must clear out of this or Mrs. Pat 'll be vor turnin' us out."

So, with much knocking out of pipes, scraping of chairs, and stamping of heavy footsteps, they departed.

Sleeping near the
withered Nosegay
Which he pulled
the Day before.
E.B. Browning
A. Bauerle

GREAT MEN IN LITTLE WORLDS.

By GEORGE GISSING.

II.—THE JUSTICE AND THE VAGABOND.

MR. RUTLAND did not feel well this morning. As he dressed a sense of faintness troubled him, the result, perhaps, of very hot weather in these days of spring. After breakfast he reclined languidly in the study, trying to read. There was no absolute necessity for his going forth; but at eleven he drove into the town to sit with his brother magistrates, preferring the tedium of the court to lonely idleness at home.

His age was about five-and-forty, and to a casual eye he seemed in good health; but certain lines upon his countenance denoted a habit of melancholy musing, and his voice suggested the same. The townspeople, regarding his wealth and social influence, his apparent domestic peace and life of leisure, judged him an enviable man. Mr. Rutland saw himself in a very different light, and to-day he suffered especially from the despondence which had weighed upon him for many years.

Born to easy circumstances, he had married at three-and-twenty; six children had been born to him, all daughters, but only three of them survived, the youngest a girl of fifteen. His wife was a woman of narrow mind and strong will: she ruled him in every detail of his life—unobtrusively, suavely, without suspecting for a moment that the yoke galled him, or anticipating the possibility of conflict between his purpose and hers. Mrs. Rutland belonged to a county family, and valued above all things her local prestige: when she went to London it was only to associate with those of her country friends whom fashion had directed townwards; if she took a holiday abroad it was merely for the sake of its retrospective advantages on her return home. She regarded everything from a rigidly provincial point of view. Her daughters were admirably brought up—that is to say, with a conscientiousness which never lost sight of their destiny as county ladies. The father had as little voice in their education as in the daily management of his household. Of him Mrs. Rutland expected only that he should exert himself to support the dignity of his name in county circles. To please her, he had twice contested a Parliamentary election, but on both occasions was defeated. Twice he had been mayor of the town in which he owned much property, and near to which he lived. Mrs. Rutland viewed this as rather a condescension, but it kept the good man occupied. For the same reason she liked him to discharge his functions as justice of the peace. At her bidding he took part in various local activities: opened flower-shows, presided at important lectures, encouraged movements for the (moderate) benefit of working folk, and so on — all which duties Mr. Rutland thoroughly disliked. But still more did he dislike the shadow of domestic discord, and he knew very well that his independence could only be asserted at the cost of his tranquillity.

All his acquaintances spoke well of him. One or two old friends regretted the lack of energy which frustrated his natural abilities, and wondered that a man so well read, so interesting in private talk, should be content to lead such a humdrum existence. But as to the amiability and generosity of his character opinions never differed. As a magistrate, he enjoyed a reputation for leniency, and the town scamps whom he could not but commit to jail counted on Mr. Rutland's compassion when they came out again.

This morning, when he entered the court, a case of assault was being heard. Evidently a paltry matter. The prisoner, a stranger in the town, had obtained work at house-painting, and while thus occupied, an hour or two ago, had got into a quarrel with a loafing fellow, who accused him of some trade irregularity. Losing patience under insult, he knocked the man down, and was forthwith given into the charge of a constable who stood by. Mr. Rutland observed the prisoner, and at once

felt a peculiar interest in him: face and bearing spoke strongly on the man's behalf; he looked superior to his position, and, though uncomfortable in the present circumstances, was neither shamefaced nor impudent. Aged forty or more, he had a clear brown skin, a bright intelligent eye, and a strong upright figure.

"What's his name?" inquired Mr. Rutland, in an undertone, of his neighbour on the bench.

"Henry Goodeve."

"Goodeve—Goodeve——"

Mr. Rutland reflected with a puzzled countenance, and again scrutinised the prisoner. At that moment Goodeve's voice was heard in answer to a question. Mr. Rutland listened intently, and his features betrayed some strange thought.

A trivial fine was imposed, whereupon the prisoner declared that he had neither money nor money's worth—unless it were the clothing he stood in. He had arrived in the town only yesterday, all but penniless, and this morning had found work. The statement was made with a half-amused air. Moreover, the man's speech made proof that he was no ordinary artisan; his tongue, though not particularly refined, smacked of gentle breeding.

"I shall pay for him," said Mr. Rutland privately. "And I must have a word with him out of court."

The prisoner's case was allowed to stand over for half an hour. Led, at Mr. Rutland's direction, into a private room, Goodeve saw to his surprise that one of the magistrates wished to speak with him.

"May I ask," began the kindly looking gentleman, "whether you were at school at Brockhurst?"

"I was," answered Goodeve with a smile, gazing steadily into the questioner's face. "I left in '62."

"The year before I did. Have you no recollection of me?"

"I'm afraid I haven't. And yet——"

"My name is Rutland—Dick Rutland."

The other slapped his thigh, and broke into words of delighted recognition. Thirty years ago these men were chums inseparable at a boarding-school of good repute. They came from different counties, and did not know each other's kinsfolk; Harry Goodeve was the son of a struggling shopkeeper, and had little to hope save from his own efforts; while Dick Rutland saw the path of life smooth and pleasant before him. At fifteen Goodeve was put into an office, where he idled and played pranks; at sixteen he went to sea, and from that day to this he had been a cheery vagabond on the face of the earth.

"You must come to my house," said Mr. Rutland after a few minutes' talk. "It happens that I am quite alone for a few days; my wife and daughter are in London. Half-an-hour's walk from here; anyone will show you the way. I shall be home at half-past one."

"What about my fine?"

"Pooh! We'll soon settle that."

When his Worship reached home he found the vagabond stretched at full length on a shady part of the lawn; a gardener, in doubt as to his assertions, had kept an eye upon the man.

"Is there a pond or stream anywhere about here," Goodeve asked, "where a fellow could have a plunge?"

"Well, no. But if you don't despise an ordinary bath——"

"Not at all, when I can do no better."

They sat down together to luncheon; a strange contrast as to their clothing, but in other respects no unsuitable companions. Goodeve betrayed not the least embarrassment amid these luxurious surroundings; he ate and drank with hearty appetite, and talked merrily of old days. His host, seeming to throw off a burden of care, astonished the domestic in attendance no less by his boyish gaiety than by his intimacy with so strange a guest. As yet, nothing was said of intervening years; they lived again in their schooltime, discussed the masters, roared over ancient jokes, revived the great days of cricket and football. Goodeve began to ask what had become of this, that, and the other fellow; they were now alone, and could speak more freely.

"Gubbins disappeared," said Mr. Rutland. "His father was mixed up in a disagreeable affair, and I'm afraid the poor chap——"

"Ah!" cried the other. "I met him in New Zealand ten or twelve years ago. He was at the bar—serving liquor."

"Heavens!"

"And Potts—Toady Potts, not Sammy. I came across him in Sumatra. He was clerking for a Dutch pepper-grower; had intermittent fever, and must be dead long ago."

"How have you travelled so much?" asked Mr. Rutland. "As a sailor?"

"Generally working my passage, but not always. On land I've been a bit of everything. I'm a good carpenter—you remember I had the knack at school—and I reckon myself no bad hand at plumbing. I've done a little tailoring now and then.

"IS THERE A POND OR STREAM ANYWHERE ABOUT HERE," GOODEVE ASKED, "WHERE A FELLOW COULD HAVE A PLUNGE?"

I've gained glory as a scene-painter, and made shift to live by taking photographs. It's only in England that I've sometimes found it hard to get a meal. Oh, yes! I often come back to the old country, though I have no relatives left. I get home-sick, and make plans for settling down, but I suppose I never shall. I landed at Southampton five weeks ago from Bahia—an old friend of mine is in the tobacco business there, and I went just to see him, from Jamaica. Well, I landed with a dollar or two, found the weather pleasant, and just tramped with nothing particular in prospect. At home here I generally fall back on house-painting, though it isn't always easy to get work. I don't take kindly to the rougher sorts of work. Last time, five years ago, I had to do a bit of navvying, down in Kent. It didn't suit me, and I soon shipped again."

"What a life!" murmured the listener, staring before him.

"Oh, not so bad——"

"You misunderstand me. I mean what a glorious life! I envy you, Goodeve; with heart and soul I envy you!"

"You do? Well, I can't quite understand that either. A man who has a house like this; free to come and go as the humour takes him——"

"Free!" cried the host. "Don't judge by appearances. You ought to know the world better. There's no man living who is more a slave than I am."

His voice quivered into silence, and he seemed to reprove himself for indiscretion.

"Come out into the garden, old fellow. Light another cigar, and put some in your pocket."

This afternoon there was a garden-party at a house in the neighbourhood, and Mr. Rutland had promised to attend it. By failing to do so he would excite surprise, and cause no little disappointment to the people who counted his presence an honour. But time stole on; he felt ever more reluctant to leave his entertaining companion for the wearisome society of his neighbours; at length he said to himself deliberately that go he would not. Let Mrs. Rutland express her astonishment when she heard of the neglect. "But, my dear Richard, surely it was rather——" He shut his ears against the voice, and listened only to Goodeve.

"—The next day we sighted the Horn. I forgot all my hardships. Do you remember how we used to talk of it at school—going round the Horn? I thought of you then; I did indeed."

At seven o'clock, when the sun was setting and the air had grown cool, Mr. Rutland rose and stretched himself.

"There's the first dinner-bell. Hours have gone like minutes."

"All the same, I'm pretty hungry," laughed Goodeve.

"Why, so am I; the first time I've had an appetite for years. It's the sea air. What a life! What a life! Of course, you'll stay here over night. Your coming was a godsend. I feel young again. I begin to see things——"

He broke off and walked with his head down, musing.

After dinner—a meal of scandalous informality—they went into the library, and Goodeve began to run his eye along the shelves.

"Why, you seem to have nothing here but books of travel. I can't make you out, Rutland. If you've always thought as much of travelling as you did at school, why the deuce have you led such a stay-at-home life? Wife and family! But you've always been a rich man. What was to prevent you going trips about the world as other men do?"

What, indeed? In the days of love-making Rutland delighted himself with the thought that he and his beloved would journey far and wide, beholding all the glories and the wonders of earth. Their honeymoon was to include a visit to Egypt, but Mrs. Rutland soon discovered that she had little taste for foreign countries, and on the hither side of the Alps they turned homeward. The births of his children, which came in rapid succession, loaded year by year the fetters of domestic bondage; until the poor rich man stifled in silence his last hope. At the suggestion of distant travel Mrs. Rutland would have smiled indulgently — that terrible smile which her husband knew so well, a smile as of implacable fate. "Richard is so fanciful," he once overheard her say to a lady, and the word had a dread weight of meaning.

They opened a great atlas, and Mr. Rutland followed his friend's voyaging from land to land. Their heads together, and talking with the completest familiarity, they were as boys again. Thus had they sat many a time on the school benches, the map before them, and schemed expeditions of discovery. In those days Dick Rutland was the more sanguine, the more energetic, conscious of possessing wherewithal to travel: Harry Goodeve merely dreamed and desired. Now, with thirty years of subsequent life behind them, Mr. Rutland, the prosperous man,

the local magnate, felt his heart burn within him as he heard Goodeve tell of joys and perils which put a circle round the globe.

"Ah, you have lived!" he exclaimed at length, starting up and moving excitedly about the room. "It is you who have been the rich man; I, a miserable pauper! The Arabs have a proverb, 'Travel is conquest.' You have conquered the world, whilst I have been crouched in my petty corner, playing at life. I go down yonder, and sit in a big chair, and look as wise as an owl, and send poor devils to prison: this is the utmost I have attained to. You have been living among men, working, suffering, enjoying like a man, and every day learning something new. Good God! it maddens me to look back on these thirty years, and contrast my vegetable existence with such a life as yours. Can you imagine the sort of people I have to do with? Men and women who wear a certain kind of costume in the morning, and a different kind at night, and who know nothing more important than the change from one to the other. We attend meetings about local option, and you, you are fighting a hurricane in mid ocean, or landing in some new port, with a new world before you."

"Hang it, man!" shouted the other with a great laugh. "It's not too late. You're no older than I am."

Mr. Rutland stared at him with fascinated eyes.

"Yes—yes," he said slowly and under his breath. "I might see something of the world yet."

He moved again to the atlas, and turned to the map of South America.

"That's one of the things I most wish to see—the river Amazon."

"Little more than a fortnight's voyage," replied Goodeve mirthfully.

"A fortnight! Yes. A fortnight."

Mr. Rutland spoke as one in a dream. His finger trembled as it marked the course of the great river.

"Go to Bahia," said Goodeve, "and see my friend the tobacco-merchant. A fine fellow. He can tell you more in an hour than I could in a week. I wish I could go with you."

THEY OPENED A GREAT ATLAS, AND MR. RUTLAND FOLLOWED HIS FRIEND'S VOYAGING FROM LAND TO LAND.

Again Mr. Rutland stood and stared at his guest.

"Why not? You mean the expense of going as a passenger? What's that to me? Say you will go, and——"

He paused, his hand in the air, and seemed to be fronting a vast enterprise. However ludicrous the obstacles in another's sight, to Mr. Rutland they meant nothing less than the crushing habits of a lifetime.

"I'll go fast enough," said Goodeve, seeming to sniff the Atlantic.

"We might do more than just go to Brazil and back," pursued his host, whose

face had grown very red. "If I once left England, I shouldn't be content to see only one country. I should like to travel for a year or more—perhaps for two or three years."

His voice quivered and his eyes flashed. Goodeve watched him with a smile of sympathy.

"Will you travel with me, Harry, as far and as long as I like?"

"Of course I will! When can you be ready to start?"

Mr. Rutland fell into a reverie. He was silent for more than five minutes, then drew a deep breath, and said gravely—

"To-day is Wednesday. I will be ready to leave home on Saturday morning."

"We must look up the steam-boats."

"Yes; but whether there is a ship or not, I shall leave home on Saturday morning, and join you where you like. Stay with me one more day. I shall be busy, but I want to have you near. On Friday you shall go, and on Saturday we meet again at Liverpool, or Southampton, or wherever you appoint."

They sat talking till late in the night, and, among other things, it was arranged that Goodeve should next day change his rude clothing for a garb more suitable to Mr. Rutland's guest. He was in no way troubled by a sense of obligation. Thirty years of adventurous life had taught him to regard things with simplicity and directness: if a wealthy man chose to relieve his friend of all worldly cares, why should the friend make any difficulty? Goodeve was a bluff, plain-spoken, honest fellow, quite incapable of scheming for his own advantage. The fine points of his character appealed to Mr. Rutland as strongly as in the days gone by. Rough living, labour, and the companionship of his inferiors had not debased him; what he lacked in refinement of manner was abundantly compensated by his sincerity, good-nature, and freshness of mind. Mr. Rutland's circumstances appeared to him in a humorous light; he suspected that the poor fellow lived under female tyranny, and to Goodeve such a state of things was inexplicable. He enjoyed the thought of releasing his old comrade from such a sorry fix, and the joke was all the better if, as he suspected, Rutland meant to escape from bondage during his wife's absence.

That, indeed, was his Worship's project. Knowing the uselessness of an attempt to sleep, Mr. Rutland sat up all night, busy with multifarious concerns: arranging papers, writing letters, reviewing his personal, domestic, and public affairs. The suddenness with which he had taken his resolve, the firmness with which he held to it, seemed to him a manifestation of destiny; for, like all contemplative and irresolute men, he had a vein of philosophic superstition. He knew that his purpose must be put into effect at once; Goodeve's arrival in the absence of Mrs. Rutland was a coincidence which, the more he thought of it, made him the more eager to depart. His wife and daughters were to return on Saturday evening. He would leave a mere note, saying that he had just left home with a friend, and might be away for a day or two. Later, but before she had had time to grow uneasy, Mrs. Rutland should receive the full explanation.

There was no serious obstacle whatever in the way of his proposed flight. He could easily commit to his solicitors the care of all such matters as Mrs. Rutland would be unable to deal with. His departure need not make the smallest change in the life of his family. The mother and daughters would pursue their course as methodically, as respectably, as ever. In pecuniary affairs, Mrs. Rutland had always held an independent position; she was better fitted to manage everything of the kind than her husband. It would cost him no severe pang to be long away from his children, for they belonged to their mother rather than to him; the one who had loved him best was dead. Yes; by Saturday morning he might so have ordered everything in his control as to feel entirely free. A boyish rapture in the thought of what was before him made him regardless of the wonder, the censure, the gossip he was leaving behind.

About the hour of sunrise he was overcome with exhaustion—not a feeling of wholesome weariness, not a desire for sleep; but an oppressive faintness like that which troubled him yesterday morning. He explained it naturally enough as the result of unwonted excitement. A drop of brandy seemed to do him good, and he lay down, but no sleep came to him.

Through the day he pursued his business, though languidly; the weather was again very warm, and it seemed to overpower him.

"I shall soon pick up on the sea," he remarked to Goodeve at luncheon, after confessing that he hadn't been "quite the thing" lately. "It's just what I need. I have lived sluggishly — foregone all custom of exercise, as Hamlet says. If I went on like this, I should smoulder out at fifty or so."

"As likely as not," assented the other genially.

Again they passed a long evening together, with the big atlas open; and again Mr. Rutland worked himself into a fever of anticipation. When he went to bed his eyes looked very large and prominent, and his cheeks were burning. For an hour or two he tossed in misery of sleeplessness, then fell into fearful dreams of storm and wreck, which harassed him until day.

On the Friday morning Goodeve departed. He had learnt that a steamer would leave Southampton on Monday for Rio de Janeiro, which place they agreed to make the starting-point of their travels. The new clothing irked him a little, but, on the whole, he was rather pleased with his appearance; he went off in high spirits, well provided with money to make necessary purchases at Southampton. He had already telegraphed for berths to the shipping agents, and had received a satisfactory reply.

It rained a little to-day, and Mr. Rutland enjoyed the coolness. He thought with some apprehension of the climate for which he was setting forth, but reassured himself with the certainty that a fortnight on shipboard would quite re-establish him in health and vigour. There was nothing really the matter with him; of course not. His mind had affected his body, that was all. Then, if Brazil proved uncomfortable, he and his friend would simply travel north or south. The world lay open before him, like the atlas over which he had so often pored. He set no limit to the extent of his wanderings, and had quite resolved that nothing save ill news from home should bring him back before the end of a year or two.

When he *did* return he would no longer be the same man. His wife would know by then that her reign was over.

He had now transacted all his business, and the hours dragged. There was a letter from Mrs. Rutland, speaking of her return to-morrow, and requiring his attention to a score of vexatious trivialities; he laughed, and threw it aside. In the afternoon, feeling incapable of the least exertion, he lay on the couch in his study; his heart was beating rapidly, and he tried to calm the mental agitation which disturbed it, but every hour seemed to intensify his excitement. He dreaded the long evening and night, and wished himself already at Southampton.

At dinner he ate only a little soup. There was no disguising from himself that he felt seriously unwell, and the dread of being unable to start in the morning kept him miserably agitated. From table he went again into the study, and sat down in an armchair with a newspaper. As his body lay back he drew a deep sigh.

Shortly after ten o'clock the butler wished to speak with Mr. Rutland; he knocked at the study door, and entered. But on drawing near he saw that his master had fallen asleep.

An hour later he again entered the room. Mr. Rutland had not moved, and the servant, regarding him more closely, became aware of something strange in his appearance. He bent to listen. Mr. Rutland was not breathing.

And next day, at Southampton, Henry Goodeve sought vainly among the passengers who arrived by a certain train. "Hanged if I wasn't afraid of it!" he muttered in vexation. "His wife has come back and caught him."

BYWAYS AT THE ZOO.

By HENRY SCHERREN.

FOR one person who systematically explores the "byways" at the Zoo, and examines the animals dwelling therein, scores stroll throughout its "highways"—some with little thought of the magnificent collection, their chief desire being "to see and to be seen."

Exploration, however, will yield good results in the Gardens as well as in larger and more distant regions. It will not make the explorer acquainted with any creatures new to science, such as travellers farther afield have discovered and described for the benefit of those who "dwell at home at ease"; but it will certainly enlarge the circle of his acquaintance among the lower animals, possibly not without profit to himself.

Not far from the superintendent's office is a byway that leads to the moose-yard. Many miss it altogether; and a large number of those who see the enamelled plate glance down the steps and pass on, deeming the descent not worth the trouble. And few who go down to the railings know the interest that centres in "King of Trumps" or the story of his capture by Guy Nickalls and his transport to England in a crate. His keepers have renamed him Jemmy, and their knowledge of him dates only from the time when they took possession of him on behalf of the Society on board the steamer at Hull.

Yet Jemmy deserves considerably more than a passing glance; more even than the few minutes that would be spent in enticing him up to the railings and feeding him with biscuit. He belongs to a race that once spread wide over Europe; his ancestors are mentioned by Cæsar as inhabiting the Black Forest; and the bones of ancestors still more remote have been found, in our own country, as far south as the valley of the Lea.

In the Old World his fellows are now confined to the northern parts of Europe and Asia. In America they are being driven farther and farther back, by advancing civilisation, to the very verge of the northernmost forests, beyond which they cannot wander, for the absence of trees puts a limit to the distribution of these animals, whose chief food consists of leaves and twigs.

It may be that this diet is not altogether a matter of choice with the moose, whose long fore-legs and short neck prevent him from grazing with comfort.

Jemmy shares his yard with two reindeer of the domesticated race so important to the Laplander. These smaller and older animals persecute the larger and younger one, often driving him away from the food put down for him.

"Wait till Jemmy's got his horns, and he'll let 'em know," was the remark of one of the keepers, when, a month or two after his arrival, the reindeer pushed the moose roughly on one side, and snapped up the biscuit intended for him. Jemmy's horns, or rather antlers, have grown now, for he is in his second year; but the reindeer seem to care little for that. Before long he will have a yard to himself, and this is probably as much in the interest of the reindeer as in his, for as he grows older he will learn to use his great strength, and then his persecutors would stand a poor chance.

The home of the wild reindeer is still farther north than that of the moose, in a region of perpetual snow and ice. And as these domesticated specimens roam about their yard, one may see how well they are adapted for travelling in snow-clad regions, and the great advantage they have in this respect over the moose.

Both are "cloven-footed," to use a common but incorrect expression—for the foot of a deer or an ox or a sheep is really no more "cloven" than is the foot or hand of a man.

The diagram will show clearly the plan of a deer's fore-feet, especially if it be

remembered that the fore-foot really corresponds to the human hand. There is no "thumb," and the hoofs (3, 4) which

support the animal may be represented by the middle and the ring fingers. Those marked 2, 5 are called lateral hoofs, and

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may be represented by the index and the little finger respectively.

Now, these lateral hoofs are much larger in the reindeer than in the moose, and the division between the third and fourth digits is also deeper; so that when the animal is travelling over snow, the middle hoofs spread out, and the lateral hoofs reach the ground and thus give to the smaller animal a much broader base than the larger and bulkier moose

can have. And it is for this reason that the reindeer can cover his hundred miles a day, with a loaded sledge behind him, over ground where the moose would flounder at every step.

Hard by dwells Speke's antelope, named in honour of the African traveller, who brought home the skin and horns of a male in 1864. It was not, however, till 1890 that a specimen was obtained for the Gardens. She is an extremely gentle creature, and will readily come at call to take a piece of biscuit or apple from the hands of a visitor.

Hunting the nakong, for so the Bechuanas call these antelopes, is not the pleasantest sport in the world, if one may judge from the account given of it in the *Field* by Mr. J. A. Nicolls, who sent home the specimen now in the Gardens—

"There was no footing whatever obtainable, with the exception of a network of papyrus roots, just sufficiently tough to support a man, the bog moving up and down at every footstep. To add to the charm of the situation, the mosquitoes, prematurely disturbed from afternoon siesta, rose in clouds from the rotten swamp, biting my neck, face, and hands most viciously."

A buck, with a fine pair of horns, was sighted, but at too great a distance to offer any chance of a shot. Whilst endeavouring to get nearer, Mr. Nicolls disturbed another, which proved to be a doe. She got up from the swamp, and a shot at sixty yards tumbled her over with a splash in the water.

The next morning the carcase was brought in by some natives, together with the young doe, now in the Gardens. Moremi, the chief, was exceedingly friendly, though he expressed his opinion "that there must be some big medicine in the nakong's belly, which white men were very anxious to get." Nevertheless, without his assistance Mr. Nicolls would probably not have shot one, and the chief gave him a milch cow and a couple of milch goats to furnish milk for the young antelope on its long wagon-journey of over 800 miles to Kimberley.

THE REINDEER.

The long hoofs of this antelope are very remarkable, though there is some difference of opinion as to the precise way in which they are serviceable to these animals

in their swampy home. Some believe that the hoofs diverge, so as to afford a broad base; but Mr. Nicolls says that they are used as a "fork or prop to support the body when proceeding through floating masses of vegetation."

This is the second specimen which has been brought alive to England, and nearly twenty years have elapsed since the first was on view. It is a strange-looking creature, a little over a foot long. There is a large bony shield on the head, not

BARBARY SHEEP.

In the antechamber to the apartment containing the anthropoid apes dwells the three-banded armadillo, a strange little creature, that spends most of its time under the straw in the corner of its cage. It comes out, however, at feeding-time; and a request to the keeper will always result in the animal being taken out for inspection.

much unlike the armour of an ancient war-horse. The shoulders and flanks are armoured, and between these two shields are three bands, connected by the skin, which allow the animals to roll up into a ball.

Darwin met with the ball armadillo when travelling in South America to rejoin the *Beagle* at La Plata. He says

that when rolled up "it is safe from the attacks of dogs; for the dog, not being able to take the whole in its mouth, tries to bite one side and the ball slips away. The smooth, hard covering offers a better defence than the sharp spines of the hedgehog."

Dr. Murie, in noticing the mode of defence adopted by this animal and some related forms, lays stress upon its value as putting a stop to the mischievous pranks of monkeys, who are said to drag other species out of their holes by the tail. The mode of defence, however, was probably acquired as a safeguard against dangers more serious than a monkey's practical joke.

This power of rolling into a ball is nowhere better exemplified than in this animal. The tail and snout are brought together, and the bony plates with which these are armed completely close the gaps where the shoulder and flank shields do not quite meet. The animal then presents the appearance of a blackish-brown ball, covered with a beautiful sculptured pattern.

The third claw is very large, and is used for digging up ants' nests or turning up the soil for other insects. In walking the fore-feet are never placed flat on the ground; the animal walks on the top of its toes, and the pace is a lively trot. Many of the illustrations in popular books are evidently from stuffed specimens badly set up. There is a very bad one in the "English Cyclopædia." Not only are the fore-feet set as flat on the ground as those of a bear, the jaws are armed with a pretty full set of teeth—a manifest error, as these creatures have no front teeth.

A stroll through the tunnel, and round by the band-stand—unused, alas! for more than half the year—will bring us to the enclosure where dwell the Barbary sheep, the only wild species living in Africa. They are found in parties of two or three scattered over the southern slopes of the Atlas, from the Atlantic to the Tunis—a little patch in the north-west corner of the Continent.

The rams are noble-looking beasts, some three feet high, with massive horns, a thick neck-mane, and a heavy fringe of hair on the fore-limbs. The females are somewhat smaller, with shorter mane and fringe, but carry nearly as large horns as their lords. One would think that these animals would form conspicuous objects in the landscape. This, however, is not the case, for their colouring is in a high degree protective.

Mr. E. N. Buxton, probably the first Englishman who stalked these animals, says: "I hunted for twenty-three days, being nearly always out from before sunrise till after sunset, and I got shots at only four during that time. The reason for this is the extraordinary capacity for hiding itself shown by the 'Aroui' [the Arab name for this animal], in which it is assisted by its own nearly invisible colour, which is pale rufous-yellow, and by the extremely broken character of the rocks."

But in the Gardens these creatures, far from seeking to keep concealed, troop down to the railings as soon as a visitor appears, as if the sole reason for the said visitor's existence were to bring buns and biscuits for them. They will feed quietly enough from one's open hand; but it is well not to keep the biscuit-bag near the bars, or it will be snatched away, and biscuits and bag swallowed in a twinkling.

The visitor's only difficulty will be to distribute his favours equally, for the lord of the flock has a keen sense of what is due to him, and will drive away the ewes and the young sheep in no gentle fashion. But a little ingenuity will manage that these, too, shall have their share.

Is it necessary to end this stroll in the byways with the caution that few wild animals will bear teasing? It is to be hoped not. A legend with a substratum of fact is current in the Gardens that a man who had been teasing the Barbary sheep carried home his forefinger in his pocket. The sharp edge of the horn caught it against one of the upright bars of the enclosure, and sheared it off more quickly than the cleverest surgeon could have done.

A TEXAS LEGEND.

By STEPHEN CRANE.

"REMEMBER that time, Major?" said the railroad man.

"You bet I do," rejoined the Major.

"Go ahead and tell it," said the others.

The Major lifted his glass, and carefully scrutinised the bright liquid.

Well, Tom's line, you see, was just being put through the interior of the State at that time, and one day he asked me to go out with him to some little town which he was going to open up with an auction sale of lots, and beer and sandwiches for the people, and all that, you know. Well, I went along, and there was a big freight-car loaded down with kegs and provisions. Everybody was having a great time. Tom got ill during the sale, so he went into a little shanty to lie down, while I went over to the freight-car to get some ice to put on his head. I was in the car, scouting around after ice, when, all of a sudden, someone slammed the door to, and made the inside of the car as dark as pitch. Then somebody in the darkness began to swear like a pirate, and I heard him swing his revolver loose. I began to see the game then.

It seems that there was a fellow around there that a good many people wanted to kill, and they said they were going to kill him that day at the sale, too. Somebody had pointed him out to me during the morning, and I had heard him brag, so I recognised this voice in the darkness. I think he decided they slammed the door on him so that when he opened it to come out they could get a good fair chance to make a sieve of him. The way that man swore was positively frightful. He wasn't very good company, either. I stood still so long that I felt the bones in my legs creak like old timbers, and I didn't breathe any harder than a canary-bird. He went on swearing at a great rate. I began to think of Tom and his pain, wishing that he had died rather than I had come for that ice.

At last I found that I had got to move. There was no help for it. My legs refused to support me in this position any longer. My head was growing dizzy, and if I didn't change my attitude I would fall down. I hadn't remained motionless for so very long either, but in a darkness where a man can't tell whether he is standing on his feet or his ears, the faculty of balance isn't much to be counted on. My heart stopped short when I felt myself sway, but I shifted one foot quickly, and there I was again. But that accursed foot had made a squeak.

The fellow listened for a moment, and then he yelled: "Who the hell is in here?"

I didn't say a word, but just dropped down to the floor as easy as a sack of oats.

He listened for a time, and then bellowed out again: "Who's in here?" I suppose that he figured that it wa'n't one of his enemies, or they would have got him while he was swearing to himself over in the corner.

"Who's in here, by Gawd! Come along now, galoot, an' speak up er I'll begin t' bore leetle holes in yeh! Who er yer, anyhow? Whistle some, now, by Gawd, er I'll fair eat yeh!"

He was beginning to get mad as a wild cat. I could fairly hear that fellow lashing himself into a rage, and getting more crazy every minute. All the kegs were up in his corner, and when I felt around with one hand I couldn't find a thing to get behind. Every second I expected to hear him begin to work his gun, and if you have ever lain in the darkness and wondered at what precise spot the impending bullet would strike, you know how I felt. So when he yelled out again, "Who er yeh?" I spoke up and said, "It's only me."

"Thunder!" cried he, in a roar like a bull, "Who's me! Give yer hull damn name an' pedigree, Mister, if yeh ain't fond of a reg'lar howling, helling row!"

"I'm from Houston," said I.

"Houston," said he, with a snort. "An' what er yeh doin' here, stranger?"

"I came out to the sale," I told him.

"Hum," said he; and then he remained still for some time over in his end of the car.

"LET 'ER GO," HE SAID.

I was congratulating myself that I ran no more chance of trouble with this fiend, and that the whole thing was now a mere matter of waiting for some merciful fate to let me out, when suddenly the fellow said, "Mister!"

"Sir," said I.

"Open that there door!"

"Er—what?"

"Open that there door!"

"Er—the door to the car?"

He began to froth at the mouth, I think. "Sure!" he roared. "Th' door t' th' car! There hain't fifty doors here, be ther! Slid 'er open, or else, Mister, you be a goner, sure." And then he cursed my ancestors for fifteen generations.

"Well—but—look here," said I. "Ain't—look here—ain't they going to shoot as soon as anybody opens that door? It——"

"None 'a yer damned business, stranger!" the fellow howled. "Open that there door, er I'll everlastin'ly make er ventilator of yer. Come on, now. Step up." He began to prowl over in my direction. "Where are yeh? Come on now, galoot. Where are yeh? Oh, jest lemme lay my ol' gun ag'in yeh, an' I'll fin' out! Step up."

This cat-like approach in the darkness was too much for me. "Hold on," said I; "I'll open the door."

He gave a grunt and paused. I got up and went over to the door.

"Now, stranger," the fellow said, "es soon es yeh open the door jest step erside an' watch Luke Burnham peel th' skin off a' them skunks."

"But, look here——" said I.

"Stranger, this haint no time t' arger! Open th' door!"

I put my hand on the door and prepared to slide my body along with it. I had hoped to find it locked, but unfortunately it was not. When I gave it a preliminary shake it rattled easily, and I could see that there was going to be no trouble in opening the door.

I turned toward the interior of the car for one last remonstrance. "Say, I haven't got anything to do with this thing. I'm just up here from Houston to go to the sale——"

But the fellow howled again: "Stranger, er you makin' a damn fool a' me! By the——"

"Hold on," said I. "I'll open the door."

I got all prepared, and then turned my head. "Are you ready?"

"Let 'er go."

He was standing back in the car. I could see the dull glint of the revolvers in each hand.

"Let 'er go," he said again.

I braced myself and put one hand out to reach the end of the door; then, with a groan, I pulled. The door slid open, and I fell on my hands and knees in the end of the car.

"Hell!" said the fellow. I turned my head. There was nothing to be seen but blue sky and green prairie and the little group of yellow board shanties with a red auction flag and a crowd of people in front of one of them.

The fellow swore and flung himself out of the car. He went prowling off toward the crowd, with his guns held barrels down and his nervous fingers on the triggers. I followed him at a respectful distance.

As he came near to them he began to walk like a cat on wet pavements, lifting each leg a way up. "Where is he? Where is th' white-livered skunk what slammed thet door on me? Where is he? Where is he? Let 'im show hisself! He dassent! Where is he? Where is he?"

He went among them, bellowing in his bull fashion, and not a man moved. "Where's all these galoots what was goin' t' shoot at me? Where be they? Let 'em come! Let 'em show theirselves! Let 'em come at me! Oh, ther's them here as has got guns hangin' to 'em; but let 'em pull 'em! Let 'em pull onc't! Jest let 'em tap 'em with their fingers, an' I'll drive a stove-hole through every last one 'a their low-down hides! Lessee a man pull a gun! Lessee! An' lessee th' man what slammed th' door on me! Let 'im projuce hisself, th' ——" And he cursed this unknown individual in language that was like black smoke.

But the men with guns remained silent and grave. The crowd for the most part gave him room enough to pitch a circus tent. When the train left, he was still roaring after the man who had slammed the door.

"And so they didn't kill him, after all?" said someone at the end of the narrative.

"Oh, yes, they got him that night," said the Major. "In a saloon somewhere. They got him all right."

THE TALL HAT AND ITS ANCESTORS.

By R. S. LOVEDAY.

THE eternal problem of the tall hat has been before us again with all the prominence which it is apt to assume in the light of one of those vigorous protests

JAMES VI.

that are periodically made against its continued existence in our advanced civilisation. This time the protestor is Lord Ronald Gower, whose outraged artistic senses have at last compelled him to emerge from the æsthetic serenity of his path of life, and, in the full glare that a London morning newspaper can throw on any subject, he steps forth to do battle against "this most uncomfortable and hideous head-gear, worthy of a scarecrow, but not of a human being."

His Lordship is no crank. He does not stand alone in waging war on the "ugliest and least sanitary headgear." Even the dress-reformers, whose notions on a rational attire librate between the buckles and knee-breeches of last century and the jaunty Jaegerism of our own, have a following amid the compact majority itself in the matter of hats. For the average man, impatient of the renascence of the ruffle, or the substitution of silk for tweed, is glad to exchange the soft hat or the "bowler" for his "topper." This fact, however, only shows how insistent is the silk hat. Whole classes of the community have abandoned the silk hat altogether, or don it only on rare occasions, of which the cricket field is certainly not one, as it was of yore. The gallant lady who gallops in the Park or follows the hounds has largely abandoned the tall hat, which she borrowed from the mere man at a time when she was still womanly—whatever that epithet may mean. And yet the tall hat remains among us with the persistency of the poor. The provinces, it is true, have gradually relegated it to the doctor, the rest of the community retaining it only for the Sunday. The average provincial, indeed, might say of his tall hat as Mr. Phenyl remarked of his evening-dress trousers—it has been attending funerals for years. In short, the country wears its silk hat one day of the week and puts it on the shelf the other six. London reverses the order of things, for the silk hat is to be seen in all its glossy glory for six days, and is left at home on the seventh. Yet, if it were worn nowhere except in town, the tall hat would still be a menace. If you watch the 'buses

CHARLES I.

roll citywards of a morning from every corner of the metropolis with their thousands of tall-hatted passengers, and if you

are among the acute minority of reform, your heart must sink within you as you wander through that black forest, where, to continue the metaphor, miasma—for

THE APOSTLE OF NORWICH (DIED 1592).

Lord Ronald declares the topper to be insanitary as well as hideous—lingers as in the jungle itself.

If the dress-reformers generally remembered how long the tall hat, in varying shapes, has covered the heads of men, the knowledge of its persistence would not add to their hopefulness of its abolition. True, the early Saxons favoured the simple close-fitting hood; but the Greeks had invented the *petasus*. In England it was the nobility who began wearing high-crowned hats. During the fourteenth century the hats were high, rounded on the crown, and turned up over the forehead, the brim and the body being of different colours. As a rule, the latter was white, the brim being blue, or green, or red. But the most remarkable feature of this quaint headgear, which you must often have seen in old prints, was the feathers that adorned it. These plumes, fastened to the hat by gorgeous jewels, at last reached such an extravagant height that the wearer seemed to be appended to his feather, rather than the feather to the wearer. These hats were the real ancestors of the present-day "topper" against which Lord Ronald Gower has his fling; and by the end of the sixteenth century it was clear that they had come to stay. It was the poor little busy beaver that really settled the question. The mighty merchant who ambled to Canterbury with Chaucer's pilgrims wore, you may remember, a "Flaundrish bever hat"; but it was much later before beaver was introduced into England. Stubbes, the author of the quaint "Anatomie of Abuses," wrote deprecatingly of the fashions of 1590 pretty much in the vein that Lord Ronald Gower deals with the hats of to-day. "As the fashions," quoth he, "be rare and strange, so is the stuff whereof their hats be made divers also; for some are of silk, some of velvet, some of taffetie, some of sarcenet, some of wool, and, whiche is more curious, some of a certaine kind of fine haire; these they call beaver hattes, of xx, xxx, or lx shillings price, fetched from beyond the seas, from whence"—note the fine exclusiveness of him—"a great sort of other vanities doe come besides." The beaver soon became the chief material in hat-making, and in 1638 a law was actually passed prohibiting any other material being used for hats. From this date onwards for two centuries the beaver crowned the man-world, till at last nature could not keep pace with fashion, and the supply gradually became altogether exhausted both in Europe and in America.

The hatter began to exercise his ingenuity in a marked manner in the stately times of great Elizabeth. The vagaries of fashion greatly troubled the soul of Mr. Stubbes, "Sometimes," he says, "they use them sharpe on the crowne, perking upp like the spere or shaft of a steeple, standyng a quarter of a yard above the crowne of their heads,

ISAAC PENNINGTON, LORD MAYOR OF LONDON.

some more, some lesse, as please the fantasies of their inconstant mindes." As a moderate shape, take the hat of John More, the famous "Apostle of Norwich,"

THE STYLE OF 1786.

GEORGE III. IN A NIVERNOIS HAT.

AN ITALIAN TALL HAT.

A WOMAN'S HAT OF 1806.

MR. N. M. ROTHSCHILD.

GEORGE IV.

who is said to have worn the longest beard of his time, because, as he put it, "no act of his life might be unworthy of the gravity of his appearance." More was an enthusiastic Protestant of the Puritan type, and was not likely to follow the fantasies of fashion. The same is said of Sir Isaac Pennington, the Puritan Lord Mayor of London. His taste did not lie in the direction of City dinners, nor did he hanker after the company of fops and dandies. Milton himself, and the great religious leaders of the time, were his associates, and his headgear, like his heart, was distinctly humble. On the other hand, look at the portrait of James VI. His Majesty is represented with a hat in the height of fashion. Nothing at this time was too grotesque for the dandies. If you will read the troubled Stubbes on the point you will see that Lord Ronald Gower is not the first to have used strong language in railing at the headgear of men. Not only were the hats of enormous height, but the wearers must needs have feathers, of "divers and sundrie colours, peaking on top of their heades, not unlike (I dare not saie cockescombes, but as sternes of pride and ensignes of vanitie; and these flutteringe sailes and feathered flagges of defiaunce to vertue (for so they are) are so advanced in Anglia that every child hath them in his hat or cap. Many," he says in a parting shot, "get good living by dying and sellyng of them, and not a few prove themselves more than fooles in wearing of them." How very modern, after all, are these ancients' animadversions on the monstrosities of millinery!

The extravagance, culminating in a mass of jewellery worn in the hatband, reached its climax with Charles I. And little wonder; for his father did his very best to turn the lad into what modern slang calls a "Johnny." The Duke of Buckingham led the fashion—his wardrobe at one time was valued at £14,000—and into his keeping the Prince was committed. Once, when they were in Madrid together, James wrote his son a letter bidding him wear "the three bretheren that ye knowe full well, but newlie sette, and the mirroure of France, the fellow of the Portugall dyamont, quiche I wolde wish you to weare alone in your hatte with a little blakke feather." Having advised his son, the royal Chesterfield turns to the Prince's companion, Buckingham: "As to

THE FASHION OF 1830.

thee, my sweete gossipe, I send thee a faire table dyamont, and I have hung a faire pearle to it for wearing on thy hatte." His Majesty, however, had the feeling that the ducal buck would not object to more elaborate bejewelling. He hoped that his "babie" would give the Duke "two long dyamonts in forme of an anker," but "if my babie will not spaire the anker from his mistresse, he may well lend thee his rounde brooche to weare, and yett he shall have jewells to weare in his hatte for three great dayes." When the heir-apparent was thus coached in coxcombry no one need wonder that his facile fancy readily took on the colour of the paternal precepts, and that when he came to the throne he revelled in sartorial extravagances which were copied by everybody with a long enough purse. Even to-day Lord Ronald Gower declares—and he ought to know—that "our classes are intensely snobbish," and it is for this reason that he adjures the Prince of Wales or the Duke of York to discard the tall hat.

Thus it was that when another Prince came on the scene the classes imitated him too. With the Restoration the high-crowned hat was put on the shelf to get a long rest. What killed it for the nonce were the amazingly extravagant fashions

AN OLD-FASHIONED CRICKETER.

THE FASHION OF 1830.

which Charles II. brought over with him from France. None of these was so remarkable as the periwig, which came to assume extraordinary proportions. The high hat, and the broad-brimmed head-gear, popularised by the Puritans, were equally out of keeping with the new fashion, which they only obscured. So the crown came down and the brims went up at each side, which gives us the embryo of the cocked hat that distinguished the last century. By the time of Anne the cocked hat had assumed several forms in its evolution. For instance, John Sly, the haberdasher of hats at the corner of Devereux Street in the Strand, held forth on the "internals of the head from the outward form of the same. His hats for men of the Faculties of Law and Physick do but just turn up to give a little life to their sagacity; his military hats glare full in the face; and he has prepared a familiar, easy code for all good companions between the above mentioned extremes." The most popular cocked hat of the time of George II. was the Kevenhuller—which had been "made in Germany," and, later, the brims became as broad as 6½ inches. On the other hand, quite a small hat, the Nivernois, was in favour with the bucks of the time of George III.

JOSEPH RITSON, 1752-1803.

THE STYLE OF 1840.

THE STYLE OF 1844.

THE STYLE OF 1864.

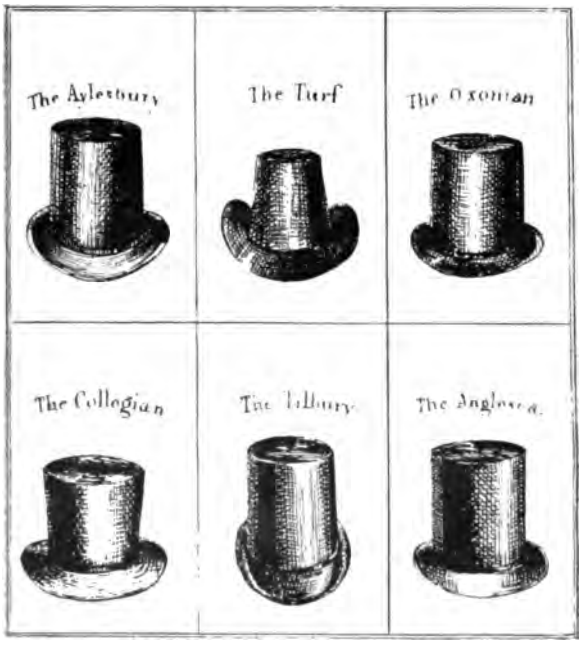
Photo by A. E. & Co.

A BEAVER HAT.

Photo by A. E. & Co.

THE "CODDINGTON."

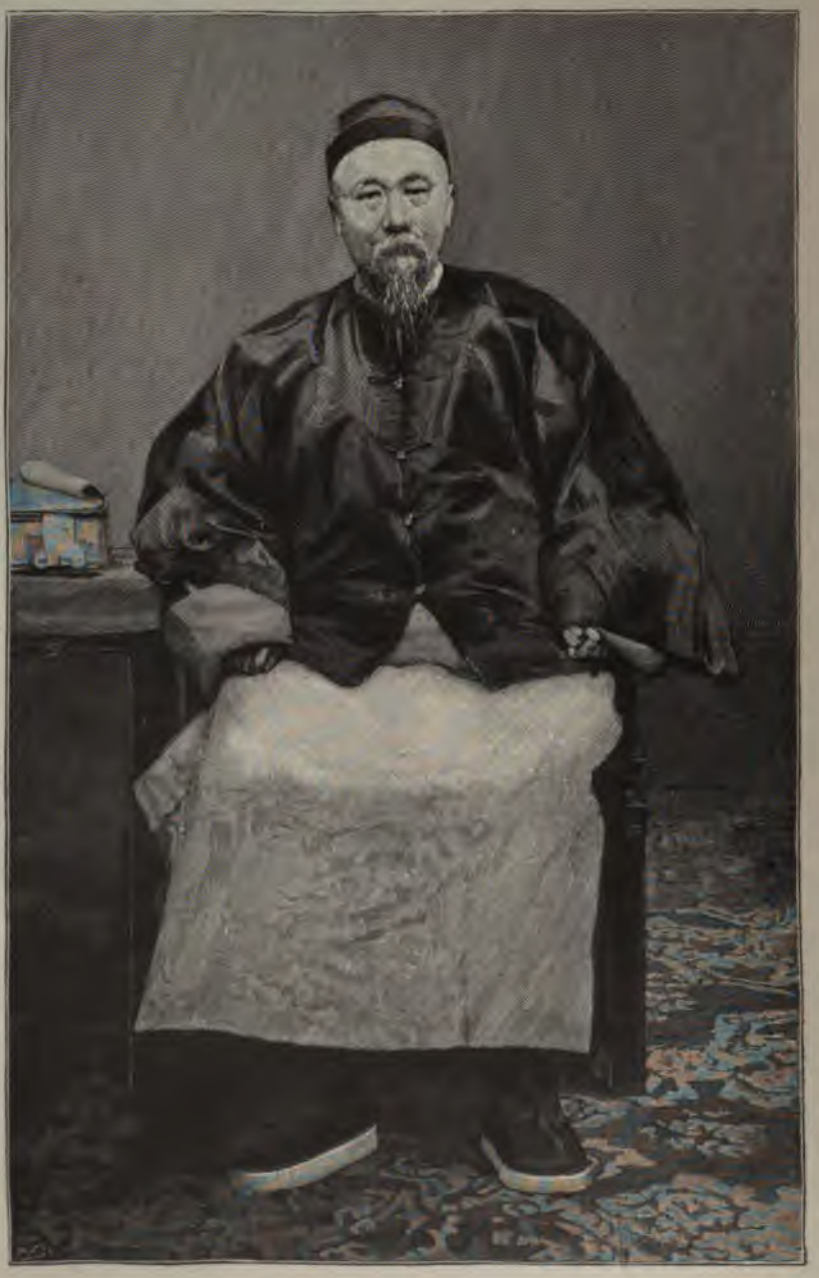
The diminutive Nivernois heralded the total disappearance of the cocked hat. The French Revolution put it out of existence and brought in the round tall hats with which the dress-reformers have so long been struggling. Lord Ronald Gower is unable to forgive the Revolution this trick, which he humorously describes as "one of its most mischievous acts." But not only did the French introduce this type of hat. They also developed a new material for its manufacture, in the shape of silk plush, which, although known in Florence more than a century ago, and introduced into France only about 1825, has been practically brought to the highest state of perfection by the French, and they still supply it to the English makers, who, by the way, are concentrated at Denton and the neighbourhood of Manchester. Silk plush was invented just in time. The beaver had gradually been becoming scarcer and more expensive. A beaver hat may possibly be within the memory of that curious quantity, the oldest inhabitant; but the younger generation know it only in costume plays—most recently in "Sowing the Wind," at the Comedy Theatre, where Mr. Brandon Thomas, as Mr. Brabazon, and Mr. Cyril Maude, as Mr. Watkin, figured in wonderful beavers, which were a joy to behold. It is probable, however, that had no substitute for beaver been found, the tall hat would have perished. Silk plush not only saved the tall hat, but gave it a new lease of life; for if beaver excelled in lightness and in pliability, silk plush excels in splendour, and it is hardly necessary to say that there is no comparison in the price.



THE FASHIONS OF 1830.

One need not refer to the accompanying Illustrations to know how the fashion of hats changes. One year the hat is only 5¼ inches, while another it is 6⅞ inches, high; and when one considers what a difference an eighth of an inch makes to a hat it will be seen how very varied the shapes may be. Then there is the question of brim. It seems only yesterday that we had the high, narrow-brimmed hat, shaped like an inverted flower-pot. Everyone remembers how Mr. Arthur Roberts as Captain Coddington in "In Town" at the Gaiety, introduced the broad flat-brimmed hat, which became still more pronouncedly horsey when he appeared as "the neatest and nattiest, shiniest-hattiest cabby" called "Gentleman Joe." At present, the fashion, while still making the hat rather low (the height is only 5⅞ inches), is gradually curling the brim up at the side. The same variation of shape regulated the hat trade of sixty odd years ago, as will be noticed from the accompanying Illustrations of the hats of that time. In 1830, the "Coddington" existed in embryo in the "Collegian"; while the man in hunting costume in one of the prints wears a "topper" not unlike the present fashion.

No other type of headgear gives the wearer so many varying aspects as the silk hat. The pompous old cavalry officer who wrote "The Whole Art of Dress"—his entire title-page would fill more than half a column of this magazine—remarked that the shape of the silk hat affects both "the appearances of age and stature, sobriety, and rakishness in the individual." That was written in 1830, but it is equally true of to-day. Certain it is no other hat looks so dressy as a silk one; and Lord Ronald Gower may not be far off the mark when he suggests, however comically, that nothing less than a fresh Revolution will be necessary to abolish the tall hat of modern civilisation.



HIS EXCELLENCY LI-HUNG-CHANG.

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with the single exception of Major Gordon himself, the foreign officers in the Ward corps were fighting, not for the sake of patriotism or glory, but for dollars. They were not of the best class of foreigners. They were often insubordinate, mutinous, and not a few of them had deserted to the rebels; some, indeed, having deserted, returned and been forgiven, only to repeat the same routine a second and even a third time. And Governor Li never forgot a fact of which Major Gordon often reminded him, that the latter was, first, last, and always, a British officer; that his sole loyalty was due to the Queen; and that, while he laboured for what he considered to be the best interests of China, those interests were never allowed to hold more than a secondary or subordinate position in his mind. He had no sympathy with the idea, "China for the Chinese," which dominated Li's thoughts and purposes, but looked at every question from the standpoint of a British subject. It is not to be wondered at that under such circumstances Governor Li used Major Gordon, but did not give him his confidence.

The military skill shown by Li in the suppression of the Tai-Ping rebellion and in crushing out the last scattered bands of the insurgents, and the energy, good sense, and administrative ability manifested by him in restoring order and prosperity to the devastated districts, largely increased his influence at Court, and made his promotion to the highest offices in the State a certainty.

It was not, however, until the summer of 1870 that the pressure of events induced the Chinese Government to summon Li to the high post which until recently he has continuously held, and where he has been, in the eyes of the Western world, at once the exponent and leader of progress in China. A fearful massacre had occurred at Tientsin in June of that year, in which the lives of twenty-three foreigners, including the French Consul and his wife, had been taken under circumstances of peculiar atrocity, and, as was well known, with the connivance and open encouragement of the highest local authorities of the city. The Viceroy of the province was Tseng-Kuo-Fan, one of the ablest of Chinese statesmen, and the patron, instructor, and lifelong friend of Li-Hung-Chang. He was broken in health because of advancing years and of continuous and exhausting service to his country. He was unequal to the task of satisfying the demands of foreign Governments for punishment and reparation for massacre and restoring order; and, at his own request and suggestion, he was transferred to a less arduous post, and his pupil, Li, was appointed Viceroy of Chihli in his stead. This viceroyalty, though the least lucrative of any in the empire, is the most sought after and the most honourable of any, since the capital is located within its limits, and hence the Viceroy becomes guardian of the person of his Imperial Majesty. Tientsin, distant eighty-five miles from Peking, is the seaport of the capital, though situated not upon the sea, but upon a navigable river; and here, since the massacre of 1870, has been located the residence of the Viceroy.

This office, nowever honourable, is still purely local, and would, by itself, have given to Li neither the scope nor opportunity for the exercise of the great abilities of which he is possessed. He has held, in point of fact, four offices almost continuously since 1870, of which the viceroyalty is by far the least in importance. They are as follows: Viceroy of Chihli, Secretary to the Grand Council of State, Superintendent of Foreign Trade for the Northern Ports, and Superintendent of Coast Defence for the Northern District. In addition to and continuous with these he has held various other offices—such, for example, as Senior Guardian of the Heir-Apparent — which, being mainly honorary, and important only as marks of imperial favour, need not be considered here.

A moment's consideration will show the enormous burden of responsibility thus placed upon the shoulders of one man under the Chinese system, whose duties legislative, executive, judicial, military, and naval are commonly combined and often confused. It will also serve to exhibit the almost limitless range of opportunity afforded for the exercise of his powers. As Secretary to the Grand Council of State, all questions of national import, whether referring to the internal administration of affairs, the outlying dependencies of the empire, or the foreign policy of the Government, came under his review, required his study, and called for decision at his hands. It was Li's duty to prepare the roads for the burial of a dead Emperor in 1875, and to give counsel and aid in resistance to French encroachments in Cochin China in 1883; to attend to the transport of four sticks of timber from the sea to Peking, where they were to serve as lantern-poles in the Temple of Heaven, in 1880; and in the same year to adjust the Kuldja question, which at the time

threatened to bring on war between China and Russia; to receive the complaint of a Vice-Consul that he had been called bad names by a naughty boy in the street, and soothe his wounded feelings, and turn from that to the question of succession to the imperial throne.

As Superintendent of Foreign Trade for the Northern Ports, Li's opportunities and responsibilities were hardly less than those barely hinted at above. All questions of commercial intercourse, of treaty interpretation, and of regulations for traffic under the treaties came to him as a matter of course. Treaty-making itself formed no inconsiderable portion of his duties, and it is probable that within the quarter of a century since his appointment to Tientsin, he has concluded more treaties than the Chinese Foreign Office at Peking; while it is practically certain that his advice has been sought, and in a large degree followed, in regard to every such convention negotiated by the latter body.

In his position as Superintendent of Coast Defence for the northern half of the empire, Li-Hung-Chang found himself practically forced to play the rôle of creator, and here he doubtless found his responsibilities and opportunities most thoroughly in line with his tastes. Unless account be taken of a few earthworks mounted with antique guns, valuable only to a collector of relics of a past age, and of an immense number of harmless war-junks, nothing existed that could be called a defence of the most vital part of the empire. Everything was to be built up from the foundation. And the only limitation to the opportunity of the superintendent was his own exceedingly limited knowledge of modern military and naval systems, the total absence of trained subordinates qualified to aid and advise him, and the fact that the exceedingly liberal allowance of funds placed within his control for these purposes still was exhaustible.

Such were the duties, briefly outlined, which "the great Viceroy" took upon his shoulders when, more than a quarter of a century ago, he obeyed the command of his imperial master, and established himself at Tientsin. The mere mention of such widely diversified and enormous labours appears sufficient to convince any person of their impracticability during an ordinary lifetime when undertaken by a single individual, even though every circumstance were unqualifiedly favourable. That anything of moment was accomplished implies an almost superhuman versatility of talent, a capacity for labour without rest, a power of organisation and an executive ability almost without limit. Compared with such a task the labours of Hercules sink into the merest child's play.

It must not be imagined that Li carried on his patriotic efforts without opposition. He was hampered, interfered with, and deceived on every hand. Superstition, ignorance, self-interest, and hostile political influence, each singly, or all in combination, were brought to bear against him and his plans. Some of his own subordinates were incompetent to perform the duties intrusted to them because of ignorance. Others sold their opinion to the highest bidder, and, having received their price, delivered this bought advice to their superior. And still others, having failed to secure a purchaser of their favour, either wilfully misused or maliciously destroyed the articles bought, and then reported upon them as having been originally worthless.

Nor, if one is to speak with candour and fairness, can the native subordinates of the Viceroy be held alone responsible for the difficulties placed in his way. Foreigners engaged to enter the Chinese service at high salaries, and for a term of years, proved, on reaching their post of duty, to have such extremely lordly views as to render their employment impossible. Combinations, either selfish or dishonest, were formed among foreigners or natives, or both, by which the mind of the Viceroy was poisoned against other foreigners invited to enter his service, and who were both honest and competent, with the result that their employment was prevented. And a similar course was often and successfully pursued to destroy the effect of sound and judicious advice given by those not in the Viceroy's service, whose only object was to render him friendly and unselfish aid. Still others, both native and foreign, who were actuated by no improper motives, yet lacked the courage to give sound advice which might prove unpalatable, and took what they thought the course safer for themselves, that of encouraging and confirming the Viceroy in mistaken ideas.

Two or three illustrations of the opposition, difficulties, and dishonesty which surrounded Li may be of interest. Only those are recited which have come within the immediate knowledge of the writer of this article. The Viceroy having placed expensive machinery in the Kai-Ping coal-mines, with a view to furnish supplies of

coal for the naval and mercantile marine, a high official at Peking appealed to the throne, asking that the mines might be closed, and the Viceroy held guilty and punished for sacrilege, upon the ground that the extraction of coal by machinery disturbed the bones of his Imperial Majesty's ancestors, then calmly reposing in the imperial cemetery, some forty miles distant from the mines. Another official, upon a different occasion, besought the Emperor to command Li to cease all his modern innovations, and to report himself for punishment, upon the ground that the introduction by him of foreign arts and appliances had angered the imperial dragon, thus causing the unusually heavy rains of that summer, which had resulted in floods, with large loss of property and life.

And it will do no harm to say that the adoption of modern ways and implements has not always been devoid of ludicrous results. The writer will not soon forget one instance of this. The Viceroy had provided himself with a military band of Chinese musicians, who had been patiently drilled and taught by an American musician until they could play a considerable range of martial and miscellaneous foreign music with a fair measure of success. One bright afternoon in midwinter the Viceroy came to an hotel in Tientsin to call upon the writer. His Excellency came in his official chair, preceded and followed by a military escort of cavalry and infantry, his entire staff mounted, numerous bearers of red umbrellas and other insignia of rank, the whole extensive cortège being led by the Chinese military band. Banners waved; uniforms, swords, and gun-barrels glittered in the sunlight; the musical instruments were well cared for and highly polished, and everything caught and fascinated the eye. But to the ear the result was different, for the musicians were blowing away with all their might, and "the man with the big bass drum" was beating out, that once familiar but undignified air, "Tommy, make room for your uncle!"

It must not be assumed that Li was exclusively surrounded by men who were either entirely ignorant, selfish, or corrupt. While there were far too many of such about him, he still had a large number of devoted, unselfish assistants. Had this not been the case, any substantial progress would have been impossible. And what was of equally vital importance, he was always fully sustained in all essential points by the authorities at Peking. In spite of almost constant memorials and complaints, his course was approved, full power and authority given him, and as liberal supplies of funds as the revenues of the empire would allow. There is no reason to believe that Li ever lost the confidence and approval of the Emperor and Cabinet, excepting, possibly, for a short time during the recent disastrous war with Japan. The Tartar monarch trusted fully in the intelligence, devotion, and patriotism of his Chinese servant, and well has that trust been deserved. No servant was ever more devoted and loyal.

Upon the other hand, Li has not received at the hands of Western Governments and their representatives that cordial sympathy and support in his efforts to build up a modern China, capable of self-defence and self-development, which he would naturally feel that he might reasonably expect. Great Britain, while keenly watchful to extend and develop her commerce, has always sought to discourage China and the Chinese from undertaking manufacturing industries. The other European Powers which have any practical interest in Chinese affairs as a rule make no secret of the fact that their policy is not to aid China in the development of her resources, and a consequent increase of strength, but rather to keep her in her present condition. The United States have not always shown the sympathy which might have been expected. In 1875 the Viceroy Li requested a distinguished officer of the American army then in China to prepare for him a scheme for the establishment of a Chinese military school of similar scope and purpose to the American establishment at West Point. The request was gladly complied with. But when these facts were reported to the Department of State, the officer was rebuked with the remark that it was the policy of the United States to aid and encourage China only in the peaceful arts of commerce.

To one who watched the progress of the recent deplorable conflict between China and Japan with interest and any degree of intelligence, it seems impossible to resist the conclusion that the most fatal mistake made by the distinguished Viceroy at Tientsin in his efforts for the past twenty-five years to enable China to defend herself was his failure to establish, at the very beginning of his course of reform, thoroughly equipped naval and military schools for the training of officers. No effort should have been shirked, no expense refused, to accomplish this; for without these schools all other preparations for defence or attack are

practically worthless. There is reason to believe that the Viceroy, in a measure at least, realised this fact, but that upon this one point he failed to secure the necessary endorsement from Peking. Had such schools been established, the result of the recent war would have been far different, or, what is more likely, it would not have taken place. Japan would have been more slow to attack even a moderately well prepared antagonist; more time would have been given for that sober second thought which so often brings peace instead of war; the Corean muddle would have been adjusted; China would have been spared infinite shame and humiliation; and Japan herself would have avoided a step which thus far appears to have brought substantial benefit only to her most dangerous enemy—a step which, unless all signs fail, she will have occasion in the near future to regard as the most unfortunate and disastrous to her own interests of all taken by her in modern times.

The Corean question has played so prominent a part in recent events in the East, the outcome of which appears to have been so disastrous to China, and personally to Li, that it deserves some extended notice here. A glance at the map will show that the autonomy of the Corean kingdom is important, if not essential, to any continued peace between China and Japan. Neither could hold it without at least being suspected of menacing the rights of the other. Its possession by any European Power ought not to be admitted by either of those great Oriental nations, since such possession would threaten the integrity of both. The temptation furnished by the weakness of Corea and its peculiar strategic position, which might lead to its seizure by Russia, was long since recognised by both China and Japan. In 1884 a distinguished Japanese official proposed, in an informal conversation with the writer, that this danger might best be guarded against by a tripartite alliance between the United States, Japan, and China which should guarantee the independence of Corea. He was recommended to seek such an alliance between his own Government and China, but informed that the United States would probably refuse to burden itself with such responsibility. And he declared that Japan would gladly enter upon such a compact with the Chinese.

The last-named Power had, for many centuries, held peculiar relations with the peninsular kingdom, which, in default of any more accurate term to describe them, have been regarded as those of suzerain and vassal. Such they most decidedly were not, whatever else they may have been. The Chinese themselves have always described this relationship as that of elder to younger brother in the old patriarchal system, which really forms the basis of their own form of government. Substantially, the Chinese position was that they did not purpose to interfere with Corea themselves, and would allow no one else to do so—a position similar in many points to the Monroe Doctrine, of which much has been lately heard. When, therefore, China had her suspicions aroused regarding the designs of Russia upon Corea, she, moved largely by the advice of Li-Hung-Chang, decided to advise her weaker neighbour, as one measure of protection, to enter into treaty relations with the principal Western nations. Li was appointed general adviser to the Corean Government, a position which he has since continuously held, and the United States Government was chosen with which to make the first treaty. Duly authorised commissioners were sent by the King of Corea in January 1882 to Tientsin; the writer of this sketch, as directed by the Department of State, went there to aid in the negotiation, and the treaty, article by article, and word by word, was discussed and arranged between him and the Chinese Viceroy. The line of action desired by Li was an exceedingly delicate one, and involved him in no easy task. He knew that Governments made treaties with other equally independent Powers only. He desired to arrange for the admission of Corea into the family of nations, at the same time not only preserving that peculiar relationship between Corea and his own Government, but to go a step further, and secure an admission of that relationship in the text of each treaty. Accordingly, at an early point of the negotiations, he presented the draft of an article, carefully drawn by himself, which recited in substance that while for many hundred years China had exercised peculiar relations towards Corea (the exact phrase is untranslatable into English), yet she never interfered either in the domestic affairs or foreign relations of Corea, and hence the existence of those relations was a matter of no concern to the United States. He was at once informed that such an article could find no place in the proposed treaty. A discussion, lasting, with some interruptions, for nearly two weeks, followed, and Li only gave up the point upon being informed

that if he persisted no treaty could be made.

When the establishment of conventions with Corea was followed by the appointment of diplomatic agents to reside at Seoul, Li-Hung-Chang, in whose hands the management of affairs between China and Corea had been left, appointed a protégé of his own to represent him at the Corean capital. Unless he has been sadly maligned, this gentleman, by his overbearing and arrogant manners, and by open hostility to and secret intrigue against the Japanese, whose interests in the country largely exceeded all others, did much to render a delicate situation dangerous, and to provoke a Power not averse to a trial of strength with China to a declaration of war.

This bit of history will show Li not only in the guise of a modern diplomat, but make plain the fact that, when the crisis came, the burden of the war fell with natural yet peculiar heaviness upon him. It will, if possible, add pathos to that first and last mission which led him beyond the limits of his native land, not as a victor, but as a suppliant for peace at the hands of a nation he had despised and underestimated. It is impossible to realise the intense bitterness, the dreadful humiliation which Li must have found in that mission to Japan, nor the weight of the heavy terms and the heavier heart which he took back and reverently laid before his imperial master.

If this sketch of the place and part held by Li-Hung-Chang in modern Chinese progress has dealt mainly with the dangers and difficulties lying in his path, it is because they have been so constant and serious that no adequate conception of the man could be given otherwise. His versatility, energy, and indomitable perseverance can only be illustrated by showing what they have enabled him to overcome.

It is unnecessary to catalogue the number or variety of lines of improvement which he has followed, or the new ideas which he has brought before the eyes and minds of the officials and people of China. While naturally his first thought and the will of the Government were in the line of defence, and hence his greatest efforts were given to military and naval affairs, the range of his labours has extended far beyond any such boundaries, and includes nearly everything which bears upon the welfare of human kind. Schools, hospitals, refuges in which victims of the opium habit may be cured, a model farm, a new seed or plant, new bridges, good roads—all these have been brought before his people, and their benefits and advantages made apparent by practical object-lessons. And beyond question, while the modern improvements introduced by him are greatly and increasingly valuable in themselves, of far more value is the permanent conviction which he has forced upon the popular mind, that these innovations are not, as they formerly imagined, inventions of the devil, and that they are not merely beneficial, but essential to national growth and even to national existence.

Of necessity his failures have been many, and some of them serious. Yet the wonder is that he met with any degree of success; and no prophet would have been found sufficiently venturesome a quarter of a century ago to predict the transformation which Li, almost single-handed, has wrought in the attitude of his people towards modern ideas, and the amount of practical progress made by them.

It is far too soon to estimate wisely the final value of the services of Li-Hung-Chang to his race and nation. The world of to-day may well bow the head to him as to a hero who has fought a magnificent fight, and, almost unaided, opened the path for his people to a new and grander national development. Future generations of his countrymen, long after his ashes have been placed beside his ancestors in An-Huei, will rightly and finally determine the value of his labours, and give him fitting place in the long line of their patriots and statesmen. To them may be safely left this duty.

Photo by A. Ellis.

JULIET.

The Annunciation
Ave Maria Gratia Plena

THE LITTLE GREEN DOOR.

NOT A TRUE STORY.

By MARY E. WILKINS.

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LETITIA lived in the same house where her grandmother and her great-grandmother had lived and died. Her own parents died when she was very young, and she had come to live there with her great-aunt Peggy. Great-aunt Peggy was her grandfather's sister, and was a very old woman. However, she was very active and bright, and good company for Letitia. That was fortunate, because there were no little girls of Letitia's age nearer than a mile. The one maid-servant whom Aunt Peggy kept was older than she, and had chronic rheumatism in the right foot and the left shoulder-blade, which affected her temper.

Letitia's great-aunt Peggy used to play grace-hoops with her, and dominoes and checkers, and even dolls. Sometimes it was hard for Letitia to realise that she was not another little girl. Her Aunt Peggy was very kind to her and fond of her, and took care of her as well as her own mother could have done. Letitia had all the care and comforts and pleasant society that she really needed, but she was not a very contented little girl. She was naturally rather idle, and her Aunt Peggy, who was a wise old woman and believed thoroughly in the proverb about Satan and idle hands, would keep her always busy at something.

If she was not playing she had to sew, or study, or dust, or read a stent in a story-book. Letitia had very nice story-books, but she was not particularly fond of reading. She liked best of anything to sit quite idle and plan what she would do some other time and think what she would like to have if she could have her wish, and that her Aunt Peggy would not allow.

Letitia was not satisfied with her dolls and little treasures: she wanted new ones. She wanted fine clothes like one little girl and plenty of candy like another. When Letitia went to school in pleasant weather she always came home more dissatisfied. She wanted her room newly furnished, and thought the furniture in the whole house very shabby. She disliked to rise so early in the morning. She did not like to take a walk every day, and besides everything else to make her discontented, there was the little green door which she must never open and pass through.

This house where Letitia lived was, of course, a very old one. It had a top roof, saggy and mossy, grey shingles in the walls, lilac-bushes half hiding the great windows, and a well-sweep in the yard. It was quite a large house, and there were sheds and a great barn attached to it, but they were all on the south side. At the back of the house the fields stretched away for acres, and there were no out-buildings. The little green door was at the very back of the house, towards the fields, in a room opening out of the kitchen. It was called the cheese-room, because Letitia's grandmother, who made cheeses, used to keep them there. She fancied she could smell cheese, though none had been kept there for years, and it was used now only for a lumber-room. She always sniffed hard for cheese, and then she eyed the little green door with wonder and longing. It was a small green door, scarcely higher than her head. A grown person could not have passed through without stooping almost double. It was very narrow, too, and no one who was not slender could have squeezed through it. In this door there was a little black keyhole with no key in it, but it was always locked. Letitia knew that her Aunt Peggy kept the key in some very safe place, but she would never show it to her nor unlock the door.

"It is not best for you, my dear," she always replied when Letitia teased her; and when Letitia begged only to know why she could not go out of the door, she made the same reply, "It is not best for you, my dear."

Sometimes, when Aunt Peggy was not by, Letitia would tease the old maid-servant about the little green door; but she always seemed both cross and stupid, and gave her no satisfaction. She even seemed to think there was no little green door there, but that was nonsense, because Letitia knew there was. Her curiosity grew greater and greater; she took every chance she could get to steal into the cheese-room and shake the door softly, but it was always locked. She even tried to look through the keyhole, but she could see nothing. One thing puzzled her more than anything, and that was that the little green door was on the inside of the house only and not on the outside. When Letitia went out in the field behind the house there was nothing but the blank wall to be seen. There was no sign of a door in it. But the cheese-room was certainly the last room in the house, and the little green door was in the rear wall. It was very strange. When Letitia asked her great-aunt Peggy to explain that, she only got that same answer, "It is not best for you to know, my dear."

Letitia studied the little green door more than she studied her lesson-books; but she never got any nearer the solution of the mystery until one Sunday morning in January. It was a very cold day, and she had begged hard to stay home from church. Her Aunt Peggy and her maid-servant, old as they were, were going; but Letitia shivered and coughed a little, and pleaded, and finally had her own way.

"But you must sit down quietly," charged Aunt Peggy, "and you must learn your text to repeat to me when I get home."

After Aunt Peggy and the old servant, in their great cloaks and bonnets and fur tippets, had gone out of the yard and down the road, Letitia sat quiet for fifteen minutes or so, hunting in the Bible for four easy texts; then suddenly she thought of the little green door, and wondered, as she had done so many times before, if it could possibly be opened. She laid down her Bible, and stole out through the kitchen to the cheese-room and tried the door. It was locked, just as usual. "Oh dear!" sighed Letitia, and was ready to cry. It seemed to her that the little green door was the very worst of all her trials—that she would rather open that, and see what was beyond, than have all the nice things she wanted and had to do without.

Suddenly she thought of a little satin-wood box with a picture on the lid which Aunt Peggy kept in her top bureau drawer. Letitia had often seen this box, but had never been allowed to open it. "I wonder if the key can be in that box," said she.

She did not wait a minute. She was so naughty that she dared not wait for fear she should remember that she ought to be good. She ran out of the cheese-room through the kitchen and the sitting-room to her aunt's bed-room, and opened the bureau drawer and then the satinwood box. It contained some bits of old lace, an old brooch, a yellow letter, some other things which she did not examine, and, sure enough, a little black key on a green ribbon. Letitia had not a doubt that it was the key of the little green door. She trembled all over, she panted for breath, she was so frightened, but she did not hesitate. She took the key and ran back to the cheese-room. She did not stop to shut the satinwood box or the bureau drawer. She was so cold and her hands shook so that she had some difficulty in fitting the key into the lock of the little green door, but at last she succeeded and turned it quite easily. Then, for a second, she hesitated—she was almost afraid to open the door. She put her hand on the latch and drew it back; it seemed to her, too, that she heard strange alarming sounds on the other side. Finally, with a great effort of her will, she unlatched the little green door and flung it open and ran out.

Then she gave a scream of surprise and terror, and stood still, staring. She did not dare stir or breathe. She was not in the open fields which she had always seen behind the house: she was in the midst of a gloomy forest of trees, so tall that she could just see the wintry sky through their tops. She was hemmed in, too, by a wide heeping undergrowth of bushes and brambles, all stiff with snow. There was something dreadful and ghastly about this forest, which had the breathless odour of a cellar. And suddenly Letitia heard again those strange sounds she had heard before coming out, and she knew that they were the savage whoops of Indians, just as she had read about them in her history-book; and she saw also dark forms skulking about behind the trees as she had read.

Then Letitia, wild with fright, turned to run back into the house through the little green door, but there was no little green door, and more than that, there was no house. Nothing was to be seen but the forest and a bridle-path leading through it.

A MAN WITH A WIDE CAPE FLYING BACK LIKE BLACK WINGS CAME RUSHING DOWN THE PATH.

Letitia gasped; she could not believe her eyes. She plunged out into the path and down it a little way, but there was no house. The dreadful yells sounded nearer. She looked wildly at the undergrowth beside the path, wondering if she could hide under that, when suddenly she heard a gun-shot and the tramp of a horse's feet. She sprang aside just as a great horse, with a woman and two little girls on his back, came plunging down the bridle-path and past her. Then there was another gun-shot, and a man with a wide cape flying back like black wings, came rushing down the path. Letitia gave a little cry, and he heard her. "Who are you?" he cried breathlessly. Then, without waiting for answer, he caught her up and bore her along with him.

"Don't speak," he panted in her ear. "The Indians are upon us, but we're almost home." Then, all at once, a log-house appeared beside the path, and someone was holding the door ajar, and a white face was peering out. The door was flung open wide as they came up, the man rushed in, set Letitia down, shut the door with a crash, and shot some heavy bolts at top and bottom.

Letitia was so dazed that she scarcely knew what happened for the next few minutes. She saw there was a pale-faced woman and three girls—one about her own age, and two a little younger. She saw, to her great amazement, the horse tied in the corner; she saw that the door was of a mighty thickness, and, moreover, hasped with iron, and studded with great iron nails, so that some rattling blows that were rained upon it presently had no effect. She saw three guns set in loop-holes in the walls, and the man, the woman, and the girl of her own age firing them with great reports, which made the house quake, while the younger girls raced from one to the other with powder and bullets. Still she was not sure she saw right, it was all so strange. She stood back in a corner, out of the way, and waited trembling; and at last the fierce yells outside died away, and the firing stopped.

"They have fled," said the woman, with a thankful sigh.

"Yes," said the man. "We are delivered once more out of the hands of the enemy."

"We must not unbar the door or the shutters yet," said the woman anxiously. "I will get supper by candle-light."

Then Letitia realised what she had not done before, that all the daylight was shut out of the house, that they had for light only one tallow candle, and a low hearth fire. It was very cold then; Letitia began to shiver with cold as well as fear.

Suddenly the woman turned to her with motherly kindness and curiosity.

"Who is this little damsel whom you rescued, husband?" said she.

"She must speak for herself," replied her husband smiling.

"I thought at first she was neighbour Adam's Phœbe, but I see she is not."

"What is your name, child?" asked the woman, while the three little girls looked wonderingly at the new-comer.

"Letitia Hopkins," repeated Letitia in a small, scared voice.

The others started.

"Letitia Hopkins, did you say?" said the woman doubtfully.

"Yes, M'm."

They all stared at her, then at one another.

"It is very strange," said the woman finally, with a puzzled, half-alarmed look. "Letitia Hopkins is my name."

"And it is mine, too," said the eldest girl.

Letitia gave a great jump. There was something very strange about this. Letitia Hopkins was her family name. Her grandmother, her father's mother, had been Letitia Hopkins, and she had always heard that the name could be traced back in the same order for generations, as the Hopkinses had intermarried. She looked up trembling at the man who had saved her from the Indians.

"Will you please tell me your name, Sir?" she said.

"John Hopkins," replied the man, smiling kindly at her.

"Captain John Hopkins," corrected his wife.

Letitia gasped. That settled it. Captain John Hopkins was her great-great-great-grandfather. Great-aunt Peggy had often told her about him. He had been a notable man in his day among the first settlers, and many a story concerning him had come down to his descendants. A queer little miniature of him in a little gilt frame hung in the best parlour, and Letitia had often looked at it. She had thought from the first that there was something familiar about the man's face, and now she recognised the likeness to the miniature.

It seemed awful and impossible, but the little green door had led into the past, and Letitia Hopkins was visiting her great-great-great-grandfather and grandmother, her great-great-grandmother, and her two great-great-aunts.

SHE SAW THREE GUNS SET IN LOOP-HOLES IN THE WALLS, AND THE MAN, THE WOMAN, AND THE GIRL OF HER OWN AGE FIRING THEM.

PART II.

Letitia looked up in the faces, all staring wonderingly at her, and all of them had that familiar look, though she had no miniatures of the others. Suddenly she knew that it was a likeness to her own face which she recognised, and it was as if she saw herself in a five-fold looking-glass. She felt as if her head was turning round and round, and presently her feet began to follow the motion of her head, then strong arms caught her, or she would have fallen.

When Letitia came to herself again, she was in a great feather-bed in the unfinished loft of the log-house. The wind blew in her face, a great star shone in her eyes. She thought at first she was out of doors, then she heard a kind but commanding voice repeating, "Open your mouth," and stared up wildly in her great-great-great-grandmother's face, then around the strange little garret lighted with a wisp of rag in a pewter dish of tallow, and the stars shining through the cracks in the logs. Not a bit of furniture was there in the room beside the bed and an oak chest. Some queer-looking garments hung about on pegs and swung in the draughts of wind. It must have been snowing outside, for little piles of snow were scattered here and there about the room.

"Where—am—I?" Letitia asked feebly, but no sooner had she opened her mouth than her great-great-great-grandmother, Goodwife Hopkins, who had been watching her chance, popped in the great pewter spoon full of some horribly black and bitter medicine.

Letitia nearly choked. "Swallow it," said Goodwife Hopkins. "You swooned away, and it is good physic. It will soon make you well." Goodwife Hopkins had a kind and motherly way, but a way from which there was no appeal. Letitia swallowed the bitter dose.

"Now go to sleep," ordered Goodwife Hopkins. Letitia went to sleep. There might have been something quieting to the nerves in the good physic.

She was awakened a little later by her great-great-grandmother and her two great-great-aunts coming to bed.

They were to sleep with her—there were only two beds in Captain John Hopkins's house.

Letitia had never slept four in a bed before. There was not much room. She had to turn herself crosswise, and then her toes stuck out into the icy air unless she kept them well covered up; but soon she fell asleep again.

About midnight she was awakened by wild cries in the wood outside, and lay a minute numb with fright before she remembered where she was. Then she nudged her great-great-grandmother Letitia, who lay next her.

"What's that?" she whispered fearfully.

"Oh, it's nothing but a catamount; go to sleep again," said her great-great grandmother sleepily. Her great-great-aunt Phyllis, the youngest of them all, laughed on the other side.

"She's afraid of a catamount," said she.

Letitia could not go to sleep for a long while, for the wild cries continued, and she thought several times that the catamount was scratching up the walls of the house. When she did fall asleep it was not for long, for the fierce yells she had heard when she had first opened the green door sounded again in her ears.

This time she did not need to wake her great-great-grandmother, who sat straight up in bed at the first sound. "What's that?" Letitia whispered.

"Hush!" replied the others. "Injuns."

Both the great-great-aunts were awake; they all listened, scarcely breathing. The yells came again, but fainter; then again, and fainter still. Then they were heard no more. Letitia's great-great-grandmother settled back in bed again. "Go to sleep now," said she; "they've gone away."

But Letitia was weeping with fright. "I can't go to sleep," she sobbed. "I'm afraid they'll come again."

"Very likely they will," replied the other Letitia coolly. "They come most every night."

The little great-great-aunt Phyllis laughed again. "She can't go to sleep because she heard Injuns," she tittered.

"Hush!" said her older sister; "she'll get accustomed to them in time."

But poor Letitia slept no more till four o'clock. Then she had just fallen into a sweet doze when she was pulled vigorously out of bed. "Come, come," said the great-great-great-grandmother Goodwife Hopkins; "we can have no lazy damsels here."

Letitia found that her bedfellows were up and dressed and downstairs. She heard a queer buzzing sound from below as she stood on her bare feet on the icy floor and gazed about her, dizzy with sleep. "Hasten and dress yourself," said Goodwife Hopkins; "here are some of Letitia's garments I have laid out for you. Those which you wore here I have put

away in the chest. They are too gay and do not befit a sober, God-fearing damsel."

With that Goodwife Hopkins descended to the room below, and Letitia dressed herself. It did not take her long; there was not much to put on beside a coarse wool petticoat and a straight little wool gown, rough yarn stockings, and such shoes as she had never seen. "I couldn't run from Injuns in these," thought Letitia miserably. When she got downstairs she discovered what the buzzing noise was. Her great-great-grandmother was spinning. Her great-great-aunt Candace was knitting, and little Phyllis was scouring the hearth. Goodwife Hopkins was preparing breakfast. "Go to the other wheel," said she to Letitia, "and spin until the porridge is done; we can have no idle hands here."

Letitia looked helplessly at a spinning-wheel in the corner, then at her great-great-great-grandmother.

"I don't know how," she faltered.

Then all the great-grandmothers and the aunts cried out with astonishment. "She doesn't know how to spin!" they said to one another.

Letitia felt dreadfully ashamed.

"You must have been strangely brought up," said Goodwife Hopkins. "Well, take this stocking and mend the toe; there will be just about time enough for that before breakfast."

"I don't know how to knit," stammered Letitia.

Then there was another cry of astonishment. Goodwife Hopkins cast about in her mind for another task for this ignorant guest.

"Explain the doctrine of predestination," she said suddenly.

Letitia jumped and stared at her with scared eyes.

"Don't you know what predestination is?" demanded Goodwife Hopkins.

"No, Ma'am," half sobbed Letitia.

Her great-great-grandmother and her great-great-aunts made shocked exclamations.

And her great-great-great-grandmother looked at her with horror. "You have been brought up as one of the heathen," said she. Then she produced a small book, and Letitia was bidden to seat herself on a stool and learn the doctrine of predestination before breakfast.

The kitchen was lighted only by one tallow candle and the firelight, for it was still far from dawn. Letitia drew her little stool close to the hearth, and bent anxiously over the fire-lit page. She committed to memory easily, and repeated the text like a frightened parrot, when she was called upon. "The child has good parts, though she is wofully ignorant," Goodwife Hopkins said aside to her husband. "It shall be my care to instruct her."

Letitia, having completed her task, was given her breakfast. It was only a portion of corn-meal porridge in a pewter plate. She had never had such a strange breakfast in her life, and she did not like corn-meal. She sat with it untasted before her.

"Why don't you eat?" asked her great-great-great-grandmother severely.

"I—don't—like—it," faltered Letitia.

If possible, they were all more shocked by that than they had been by her ignorance.

"She doesn't like the good porridge," the little great-aunts said to each other.

"Eat the porridge," commanded Captain John Hopkins sternly, when he had gotten over his surprise.

Letitia ate the porridge, every grain of it. After breakfast the serious work of the day began. Letitia had never known anything like it. She felt like a baby who had just come into a new world. She was ignorant of everything that these strange relatives knew. It made no difference that she knew some things which they did not, some advanced things. She could, for instance, crochet, if she could not knit. She could repeat the multiplication-table, if she did not know the doctrine of predestination; she had also all the States of the Union by heart. But advanced knowledge is of no more value in the past than past knowledge in the future. She could not crochet because there were no crochet-needles; there were no States of the Union; and it seemed doubtful if there was a multiplication-table, there was so little to multiply.

So Letitia had to set herself to acquiring the wisdom of her ancestors. She learned to card, and hetchel, and spin, and weave. She learned to dye cloth, and make coarse garments, even for her great-great-great-grandfather, Captain John Hopkins. She knitted yarn stockings, she scoured brass and pewter, and, more than all, she learned the Catechism. Letitia had never before known what work was. From long before dawn until long after dark she toiled. She was not allowed to spend one idle moment, had no chance to steal out and search for the little green door, even had she not been so afraid of wild beasts and Indians.

She never went out of the house except on the Sabbath-day. Then, in fair or foul

weather, they all went to meeting, ten miles through the dense forest. Captain John Hopkins strode ahead, his gun over his shoulder. Goodwife Hopkins rode the grey horse, and the girls rode by turns, two at a time, clinging to the pillion at her back. Letitia was never allowed to wear her own pretty plaid dress with the velvet collar, even to meeting. "It would create a scandal in the sanctuary," said Goodwife Hopkins. So Letitia went always in the queer little coarse and scanty gown which seemed to her more like a bag than anything else; and for outside wraps she had, of all things, a homespun blanket pinned over her head. Her great-great-grandmother and her great-great-aunts were all fitted out in similar fashion. Goodwife Hopkins, however, had a great wadded hood and a fine red cloak.

There was never any fire in the meeting-house, and the services lasted all day, with a short recess at noon, during which they went into a neighbouring house, sat round the fire, warmed their half-frozen feet, and ate cold corn-cakes and pan-cakes for luncheon. There were no pews in the meeting-house, nothing but hard benches without backs. If Letitia fidgetted or fell asleep the tithing-man rapped her.

Letitia would never have been allowed to stay away from a meeting had she begged to do so, but she never did. She was afraid to stay alone in the house because of Indians.

Quite often there was a rumour of hostile Indians in the neighbourhood, and twice there were attacks. Letitia learned to load the guns and hand the powder and bullets.

She grew more and more homesick as the days went on. They were all kind to her, and she became fond of them, especially of the great-great-grandmother of her own age, and the little great-aunts, but they had seldom any girlish sports together. Goodwife Hopkins kept them too busy at work. Once in a while, as a great treat, they were allowed to play bean-porridge-hot for fifteen minutes. They were not allowed to talk after they went to bed, and there was also little opportunity for girlish confidences.

However, there came a day at last when Captain Hopkins and his wife were called away to visit a sick neighbour some twelve miles distant, and the four girls were left in charge of the house. At seven o'clock at night the two youngest went to bed, and Letitia and her great-great-grandmother remained up to wait for the return of their elders, as they had been instructed. Then it was that the little great-great-grandmother showed Letitia her treasure. She had only one, and was not often allowed to look at it lest it should wean her heart away from more serious things. It was kept in a secret drawer of the great chest for safety, and was nothing but a little silver snuff-box with a picture on the top. It contained a little flat glass bottle about an inch and a half long.

"The box belonged to my grandfather, and the bottle to his mother. I have them because I am the eldest; but I must not set my heart on them unduly," said Letitia's great-great-grandmother. Letitia tried to count how many greats belonged to the ancestors who had first owned these treasures, but it made her dizzy. She had never told the story of the little green door to any of them. She had been afraid to, knowing how shocked they would be at her disobedience. Now, however, when the treasure was replaced, she was moved to confidence, and told her great-great-grandmother the whole story.

"That is very strange," said her great-great-grandmother when she had finished. "We have a little green door too, only ours is on the outside of the house, in the north wall. There's a spruce-tree growing close up against it that hides it, but it is there. Our parents have forbidden us to open it, too, but we have never disobeyed." She said the last with something of an air of superior virtues. Letitia felt terribly ashamed.

"Is there any key to your little green door?" she asked meekly.

For answer, her great-great-grandmother opened the secret drawer of the chest again, and pulled out a key with a green ribbon in it, the very counterpart of the one in the satin-wood box.

Letitia looked at it wistfully. "I should never think of disobeying my parents and opening the little green door," remarked her great-great-grandmother, as she put back the key in the drawer. "I should be afraid something dreadful would happen to me. I have heard whispered that the door opened into the future. It would be dreadful to be all alone in the future without one's kinsfolk."

"There might not be any Indians or catamounts there," ventured Letitia

"There might be something a great deal worse," returned her great-great-grandmother severely.

After that there was silence between the two, and possibly a little coldness.

Letitia sat gazing forlornly into the fire, thinking that it would be much more

comfortable to be alive in the future than in the past, and her great-great-grandmother sat stiffly in her opposite stool, knitting with virtuous industry, until she began to nod.

Suddenly Letitia looked up, and she was fast asleep. Then, in a flash, she thought of the key and the little green door. It might be her only chance for nobody knew how long. She pulled off her shoes, tiptoed in her thick yarn stocking-feet up to the loft, got her own clothes out of the chest, and put them on instead of her home-spun garb. The little great-aunts did not stir. Then she tiptoed down, got the key out of the secret drawer, gave a loving farewell look at her great-great-grandmother, and was out of the house.

It was broad moonlight outside. She ran around to the north wall of the house, pressed in under the low branches of the spruce-tree, and there was the little green door. Letitia gave a sob of joy and thankfulness. She fitted the key in the lock, turned it, opened the door, and there she was, back in the cheese-room.

She shut the door hard, locked it, and carried the key back to its place in the satinwood box. Then she looked out of the window, and there were her great-aunt Peggy and the old maid-servant just coming home from church.

Letitia that afternoon confessed what she had done to her aunt, who listened gravely. "You were disobedient," said she, when she had finished. "But I think your disobedience brought its own punishment, and I hope now you will be more contented."

"Oh, Aunt Peggy," sobbed Letitia, "everything I've got is so beautiful, and I love to study and crochet, and go to church."

"Well, it was a hard lesson to learn, and I hoped to spare you from it, but perhaps it was for the best," said her great-aunt Peggy.

"I was there a whole winter," said Letitia, "but when I got back you were just coming home from church."

"It doesn't take as long to visit the past as it did to live it," replied her aunt.

Then she sent Letitia into her room for the satinwood box, and when she brought it, took out of it a little parcel, neatly folded in white paper, tied with a green ribbon.

"Open it," said she.

Letitia untied the green ribbon and unfolded the paper, and there was the little silver snuff-box which had been the treasure of her great-great-grandmother, Letitia Hopkins. She raised the lid, and there was also the little glass bottle.

WITH A STEEL MIRROR.

My Dear Delight, this mirror bold,
Though many a generation old,
Being unwrinkled yet can show
Sweetly your sweetest face, I trow,
And all its graces manifold.

Better, perchance, for me than gold
Were I as hard, were I as cold,
Did I as little passion know,
My Dear Delight!

Full many a maid, now 'neath the mould,
In this has watched her charms unfold;
On this will many a maid bestow
Her smiles when you are lying low.
Then may one grave our bodies hold,
My Dear Delight!

RICCARDO STEPHENS.

THE WEDDING OF THE PRINCE AND PRINCESS OF WALES IN ST. GEORGE'S CHAPEL, WINDSOR, MARCH 10, 1863.

See "The Intermarriages of England and Denmark."

THE INTERMARRIAGES OF ENGLAND AND DENMARK.

By J. D. SYMON.

IN the first quarter of the eleventh century, when the Danes had at length obtained a firm footing on English soil, Godwine, the greatest Englishman of his time, contracted the first notable Anglo-Danish marriage. True, it was not in the strict sense a royal alliance, for Godwine's rank was no higher than that of Earl, a title won by sheer merit in Cnut's service, while his origin was obscure; but Godwine and his bride Gytha were destined to see a daughter and a son seated on the English throne, and to see other children and kinsfolk princes in England and allied with royal stock beyond the seas. The fair promise of the line was cruelly blighted, but the fame of Godwine and Gytha rests secure, not so much, perhaps, for their own steadfast worth, though that was great, but because the English Earl and his Danish wife were the father and mother of Harold.

Gytha sprang of a stock famous in Danish legend and history—a stock whose origin was only half human, for Biorn, the founder of the line, was offspring, so the weird tale ran, of a bear which had carried off a maiden. Romance, in which Gytha had been cradled, did not pass from her life with her marriage, and if the same cannot be asserted of every succeeding Anglo-Danish alliance, it is at least worthy of remark that in more than one instance the tradition has been preserved, although sometimes the romance has been sombre, while at other times it has verged on the comical. And whether the contracting parties were themselves touched with the spirit of romance or no, it seems scarcely possible for Norse royal blood and the royal blood of England or Scotland to mingle without begetting romance in some sort. The daughter of Alexander III. of Scotland wedded Erik V. of Norway doubtless because she was bidden do so, yet of that union sprang the mystery of the Maid of Norway, with its wild aftermath of legends about a stake and a day of fiery trial at Bergen. Two centuries later James III. of Scotland contracted a *mariage de convenance* with Margaret of Norway and Denmark, who brought him a romantic dowry, or rather a pledge for the same—the Orkney and Shetland Isles, concerning which there was to be much dispute in an after-time; nor, indeed, as some aver, is the question settled to this day. It was, at any rate, to serve in 1585 as a convenient pretext for an embassy whose ultimate object was the negotiation of another Scoto-Danish marriage—that of James VI. to the eldest daughter of Frederick II. of Denmark and Norway, and Sophia, daughter of Ulrich III., Duke of Mecklenburg. Opinions differ as to the precise instructions received by these Danish ambassadors, but certain it is that, whether they were commissioned to propose the marriage or no, their coming alarmed Queen Elizabeth, who sent Wotton into Scotland to frustrate any probable alliance. The treatment of the ambassadors, either by accident or through English intermeddling, fell something short of being princely, and Melville would have us believe that it took all his tact to send the Danish representatives away in passable good humour. Their mission was practically unavailing, but as they stepped on board, the ambassadors dropped a hint that their King had fair daughters, and by the marriage of the King of Scots with one of these the vexed question of the Orkneys might be amicably settled.

Such a settlement, however, was to the mind neither of Elizabeth nor of her captive Mary. The Queen of Scots wished her son to marry a daughter of Philip II. of Spain; Elizabeth had a Swedish match in view. For the next two years, beyond plots and counterplots on the part of mother and godmother, nothing was done in the matter of James's marriage; but at length, in 1587, when Mary had perished on the scaffold, the King of Scots had an unpleasant reminder from Denmark in the shape of a demand from Frederick II. that Orkney and Shetland should be restored on pain of instant hostilities. Then it occurred to the

British Solomon, whose genius as an unconscious humorist excelled even his deliberate wit, that he "had been ower slack in his wooing," so he dispatched an embassy to Denmark to negotiate a match with Frederick's eldest daughter Elizabeth. The mission prospered, and it seemed as though James had at last won him a bride.

The Queen of England, however, again interfered, and sought to divert her godson's eyes from the daughter of the sea-kings by causing Henry of Navarre to offer James the hand of his sister Katharine, a mature virgin of thirty-six. Du Bartas came from France as ambassador, bringing Katharine's portrait and "a guid report of her rare qualities."

Elizabeth was not slack to inform the Danish Court of Du Bartas' errand, whereupon Frederick, in high dudgeon, broke off the match, betrothed his daughter to the Duke of Brunswick, and demanded restitution of Orkney and Shetland, offering to pay down the mortgage money.

James's ambassadors were still in

ANNE OF DENMARK.
Wife of James I.

JAMES I.
Married Anne of Denmark.

Denmark, and begged as an alternative the hand of Frederick's younger daughter Anna. This proposal was acceded to, provided that Anna should be espoused before May 1, 1589; if not, the isles must be restored. The King then dispatched the ambassadors to Scotland, carefully providing them with a miniature of his daughter. Doubtless Frederick had heard of the Navarre portrait, and could calculate his advantage.

The pictures had no unimportant part to play. That excellent, godly young man, King James, laid the miniatures side by side and pondered them, at the same time piously betaking himself to a lengthy course of prayers for the Divine guidance in his choice between sixteen and thirty-six. After many days he convened the members of his council and informed them how he had "prayed and avisen with God for a fortnight, and that, in consequence, he was resolvit to marry in Denmark." "In consequence" is good, too good almost to be true.

The marriage by proxy was celebrated at Cronenburg in August 1589, and the bride sailed for Scotland under a small but brilliant escort. But storms beat her up and down in the North Sea; twice she sighted the Scottish coast, but each time was driven back, and at last

had to seek shelter at Upslo, a miserable port on the site of modern Christiania, whence news of her pitiable plight was brought to Scotland by a young Dane, Steven Beale, whose name scandal has unwarrantably coupled with Anna's.

Thereupon James waxed chivalrous. He would go in person to claim his bride, lest, "if he hasted not to marry at his years, folk might consider him *a barren stock*"; so, at least, he declared in certain ponderous documents which he prepared before setting sail. After many vicissitudes the King found his bride's abode, and went boldly into her presence, "buites and a'." He at once gallantly offered her a chaste salute, which she at first declined, but after a few moments' conversation she yielded, and "there past familiarity and kisses." With a charmingly feminine lack of humour Miss Strickland, who elsewhere labours to point the obvious oddity of James's conduct, solemnly assures us that the monarch's offer of a kiss to his bride "was infinitely to his credit as a human being." On Nov. 23, 1589, this marriage was celebrated at Upslo by Mr. David Lyndsay, minister of Leith, who attended the King. After a wintry journey over Norwegian mountains the royal pair joined the Court at Copenhagen, where the marriage ceremony was again performed. James, well fortified with Norse good cheer, was quite ready to be united as many times as his relatives might desire. The royal party lingered in Denmark until the following summer, and only returned to Scotland on May 1, 1590. Their reception in Edinburgh was for the times and country magnificent.

THE PRINCESS OF WALES'S BRIDESMAIDS, 1863.

Almost a century elapsed before the royal family of Britain again sought a Danish alliance: again a Princess Anne was one of the contracting parties, but this time the bride was English. On June 19, 1683, Prince George of Denmark, brother of King Christian V., arrived at Whitehall, and on the evening of the 28th he was married, somewhat quietly it would appear, in the Chapel Royal at St. James's Palace, to the lady who was afterwards to be famous as Queen Anne. The Bishop of London officiated. The event had a

ANNE, QUEEN OF ENGLAND,
Married George, Prince of Denmark.

JAMES III. OF SCOTLAND,
Married Margaret of Norway and Denmark.

deep political significance, for it was hoped that a match with a Protestant prince would reassure the public mind, disquieted as it was at the prospect of a Papist succeeding to the throne in the person of James, Duke of York. According to Bishop Burnet, however, the match did not at all please the nation, "for we knew that the proposition came from France," and it was suspected, not without reason, that Anne's husband might very readily change his religion, and indeed, but for Churchill's influence, he would at a later period have done so. Save in the matter of their family, Prince George and Queen Anne enjoyed great happiness. George of Denmark lived, as Burnet declared, "the happiest with his princess that was possible."

Of Queen Anne's husband it has been customary to speak lightly, but although it is impossible to take him quite seriously, he seems to have been a man of some quiet worth, with an interest in science, if lacking in brilliancy and force of character. "I have tried him drunk and I have tried him sober," said the Merry Monarch, "and there is nothing in him." Doubtless had Prince George himself heard that verdict uttered, he would have responded with his inevitable "Est-il possible?" It seems strange that Charles should have found the Prince utterly lacking, for in "Macky's Characters" it is recorded that "he is very fat, loves news, his bottle, and the Queen." Yet Charles sought some ebullient sparkle of wit in his companions, and therein the Dane seems to have come short, although, as Burnet kindly remarks, "Prince George knew much more than he could well express."

The next Anglo-Danish marriage took place in 1743, and this time an English Princess was surrendered to Danish keeping. On Oct. 19 Princess Louisa, youngest daughter of George II., embarked at Gravesend for Holland, thence to proceed to Copenhagen "by easy stages," says the *London Gazette* of the following week, for her marriage to the Crown Prince, afterwards Frederick V. of Denmark.

On Dec. 11 following Princess Louisa made her State entry into the Danish capital, and was married the same evening. The event was chronicled by the *London Gazette* in what was then accounted a remarkable report. This "long account," the contemporary number of the *Gentleman's Magazine* declares, was copied from the *Copenhagen*, so the *Gazette* does not seem to have had its "specials" on the spot. The occasion seems to have been worthy of the newspaper scribe. The

MARGARET OF NORWAY AND DENMARK.

Princess, escorted by a splendid procession, entered the city amid the thunder of cannon from the town batteries and the fleet, and proceeded through decorated streets and triumphal arches to the Palace of Christianburg, where she was received by the whole Court. The Prince led his bride to the Queen's apartment, whence, after an hour's stay, he again led her forth crowned. Followed by their Majesties, the Princesses, and the Court, the Prince led his bride to the King's antechamber, where the marriage ceremony was performed with music, an exhortation, joining of hands, prayers, and the nuptial benediction. A banquet followed, and thereafter the King and Queen, with the royal family, chamberlain, and gentlemen-in-waiting conducted the newly wedded pair to the Palace of Charlottenburg, through a continued glare of illumination. It was, the old report declares, "a most noble and complete entertainment, such as certainly never had been, nor perhaps ever will be exceeded, at the reception of any princess in this country."

Louisa died on Dec. 8, 1751, at the age of twenty-seven. From Horace Walpole's Memoirs we get some account of the physical tragedy of her death, and also a glimpse of what her married life had been. Though passionately fond of her, her husband, to prevent the appearance of being governed, had not been perfectly faithful, but of this no hint was ever breathed in her confidential letters to her own family. She had declared that if she was unhappy her relatives should never know it, a saying which seems to justify Walpole's pronouncement that she was a "princess of great spirit and sense."

Hitherto the romance claimed for our Scandinavian alliances would seem to be present only to the Scottish matches. The weddings of Anne of England and of Louisa have little to exalt them beyond the region of routine ceremonial and somewhat prosaic after-life. But with the marriage of Caroline Matilda, daughter of Frederick Lewis, Prince of Wales, the ill-fated eldest son of George II., began one of the strangest dramas in Danish history. Caroline Matilda was born on July 22, 1751, at Leicester House, in London. At that time her father had been dead about four months. The Princess, brought up in comparative seclusion at Kew and elsewhere, was at length, in her sixteenth year, married by proxy at the Chapel Royal, St. James's Palace, to Christian VII. of Denmark. The Princess immediately set out for Copenhagen, where her formal marriage took place on Nov. 8, 1766. Her public reception was enthusiastic, but Christian, a feeble and dissolute youth, treated her with indifference. It is not to be wondered at if Caroline, a deserted stranger in a strange land, fell a prey to designing

FREDERICK V. OF DENMARK,
Married Princess Louise, daughter of George II.

PRINCESS LOUISE, DAUGHTER OF GEORGE II.,
Wife of Frederick V. of Denmark.

THE PRINCE OF WALES.

[illegible] Alexandra of Denmark.

THE PRINCESS OF WALES, NÉE PRINCESS ALEXANDRA OF DENMARK.

adventurers. Of her pitiful downfall the fewer words the better. Struensee, a German physician, who had ingratiated

CHRISTIAN VII. OF DENMARK,
Married Princess Caroline Matilda.

himself with the late King, and had got himself appointed Prime Minister, still held that office under the weak and almost imbecile husband of Caroline Matilda. Being introduced to the Queen in a professional capacity, he prescribed for her successfully, and so won his way to her confidence. Regard at length ripened to intimacy, which gave rise to grave suspicions. These, although meagrely confirmed, sufficed to disgrace the unfortunate Caroline and to send Struensee and his comrade Brandt to the block. That the attachment was guilty cannot be proved, although the Minister boasted of conquest and Caroline signed a "confession"; that strong sympathy, perhaps affection, existed between Struensee and the neglected Queen is certain. In her prison she knew by intuition the hour of the adventurer's doom. The unfortunate Queen was summarily divorced and banished to Zell in Hanover, where she died in her twenty-third year.

The marriage of a Prince of Wales is a rarer event than is generally supposed; for of all the fourteen princes who have borne this title only five married while they possessed it, and of these five one was married abroad. Seventy years elapsed between the marriage of the Prince Regent and that of the present Prince of Wales, so the nation had at least the justification of novelty for celebrating the event with the wild ecstasy that reigned supreme during those March days in 1863. But there were deeper reasons for the national rejoicing. The Prince was popular; his bride, a daughter of the sea-kings,* fairly took the public heart by storm, and the nation, which has a trick of forgetting democratic theories on royal gala-days, was well pleased to lose its head a little over the pair on whom the hopes of succession were now to rest. Such conduct was, no doubt, "infinitely to the Briton's credit as a human being."

The memory of those wedding celebrations must still be vivid to many; but for the sake of a younger generation one may recall in a word or two the marriage of the Prince of Wales. The story can hardly be inopportune at the moment when his Royal Highness is about to repay some portion of his debt to Denmark by bestowing the hand of Princess Maud upon Prince Charles.

From the papers of Sir John Bowring it appears that the Prince first saw Princess Alexandra without her knowledge. They afterwards met at the Duchess of Cambridge's villa near Frankfort, and shortly thereafter, in September 1862, a formal

PRINCESS CAROLINE MATILDA,
Daughter of Frederick Lewis, Prince of Wales, Married Christian VII. of Denmark.

courtship was begun. It was declared by contemporary writers that the match was

* It is notable, however (Tennyson notwithstanding), that the Princess of Wales is in reality more German than Danish.

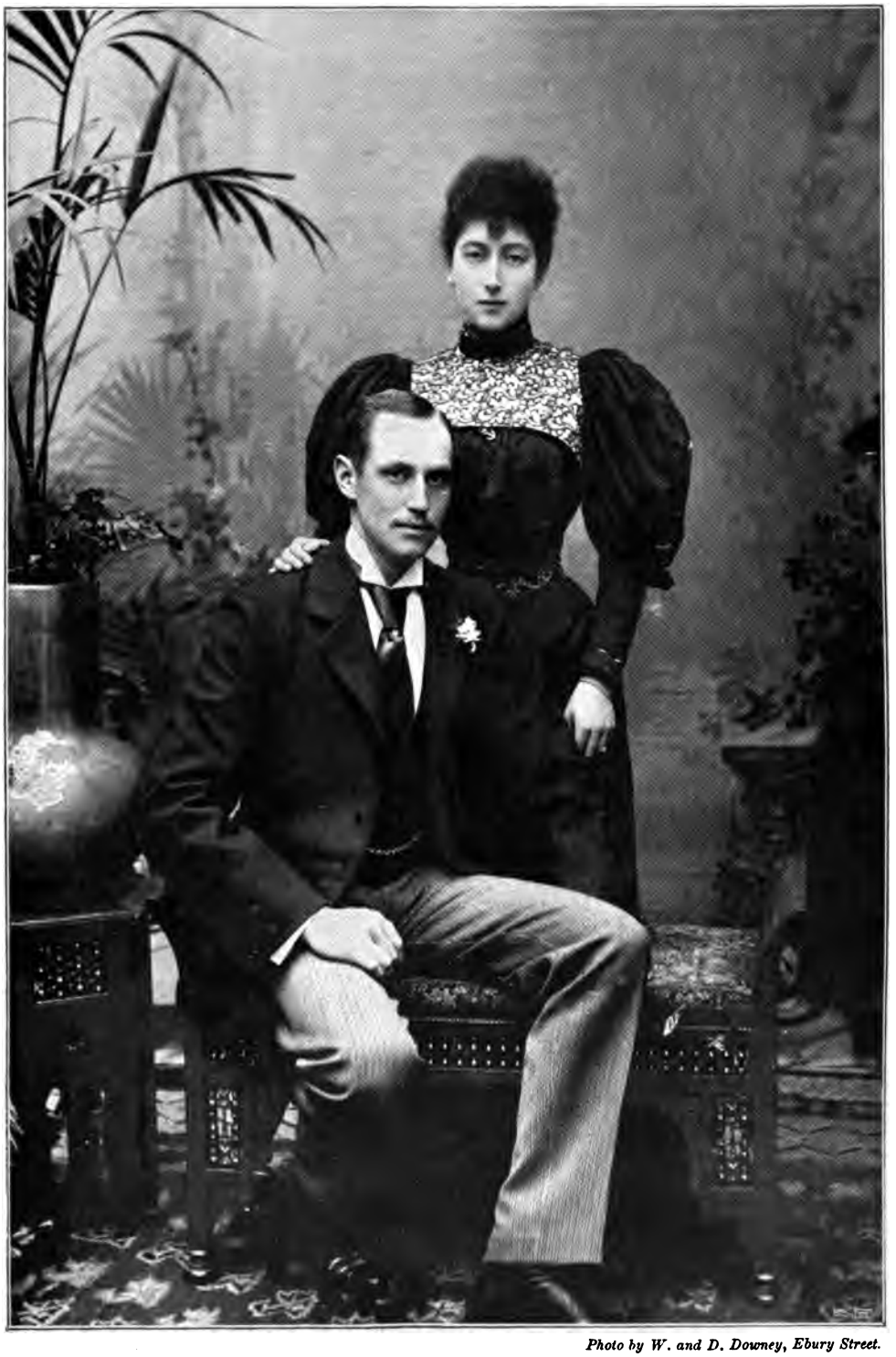


Photo by W. and D. Downey, Ebury Street.

PRINCESS MAUD OF WALES AND PRINCE CHARLES OF DENMARK.

To be Married in July.

not one of policy but of inclination, and doubtless this belief augmented the popular favour for the betrothed couple.

On Jan. 15, 1863, the marriage treaty was concluded at Copenhagen, and on Feb. 26 the Princess left the Danish capital for England, landing at Gravesend on Saturday, March 7. The popular heartiness manifested itself at first glimpse of the Princess; but when the Prince, stepping on board the steamer, made haste, in sight of the assembled multitude, to follow the excellent osculatory tradition of James I., British enthusiasm knew not how to contain itself, but swelled forth in an eager wave of congratulatory acclamation that swept the Princess in triumph to London.

The streets of the Metropolis on that Saturday were crowded as they had never been before. The Royal Progress, indeed, could hardly make headway against the thronging populace. Leaving Bricklayers' Arms Station at two, the procession of six carriages proceeded by the Borough to London Bridge, which was decorated with statues of famous Danes, and thence to the Mansion House, where the Lady Mayoress presented a bouquet. Through the decorated and rejoicing City the procession slowly struggled. The great tug-of-war occurred at Temple Bar, but by the tact and good-humour of the officials that difficulty was surmounted, and the procession moved forward more at ease. Passing, still amid continued ovations, through the Strand, Trafalgar Square, Pall Mall, St. James's Street, Piccadilly, and Hyde Park, where 17,000 Volunteers were under arms, the royal party at length reached Paddington Station at five minutes past five. There a train was in waiting to convey them to Windsor.

On March 10, in St. George's Chapel, with pomp and stately ceremonial, the Royal Houses of England and Denmark forged yet another tie. Before the end of July the Chapel of Buckingham Palace will see that bond still further strengthened by the union of Princess Maud of Wales with Prince Christian Frederick Charles George Waldemar Axel, second son of the Crown Prince and Princess of Denmark, and nephew of the Princess of Wales. The betrothal was announced last October.

Prince Charles of Denmark, it is interesting to note, stands at present next but one in the direct succession to the throne of Denmark. In the event of his eldest brother predeceasing him without issue, or indeed without male issue, Prince Charles stands next in succession. The bridegroom-elect, who is three years junior to his bride, was born at Charlottenlund on Aug. 3, 1872. He is by profession a sailor, holding the rank of Lieutenant of the Danish Royal Navy, and is a competent master of seamanship. He is at present attached to the cruising-frigate *Fyen*, and has the reputation of a smart and accomplished sailor. At the Marine Academy at Copenhagen he was a distinguished and hard-working student, having won high honours in the examinations.

Nor is Prince Charles's seamanship purely theoretical. Very recently he was employed on special service, in command of the *Heimdal*, which was sent to Iceland for the protection of the fisheries against prohibited foreign steam-trawlers. Several of these offending vessels Prince Charles captured, and in recognition of his services was entertained at a public banquet in Reykjavik. Princess Maud's place in the public heart is secure, and her wedding cannot fail to call forth the congratulations of the whole English-speaking people. That her home will still be in England, and, better still, in Norfolk, must be peculiarly gratifying to the East Anglians, with whom the Princess is a great favourite. It is understood that Prince Charles and his wife will reside at Appleton House, which is within easy reach of Sandringham. Her Danish residence is to be called "Sargen-fri"—*Sans-souci*.

The wedding is to be comparatively quiet, but the subsequent reception at Marlborough House will probably be a function of considerable magnificence. Her Majesty is to be present at the wedding, and on the preceding day is expected to attend the garden-party at Marlborough House. After the ceremony, the newly wedded pair will go away in an unpretentious fashion from Liverpool Street. And so, fittingly to conclude this story of the Anglo-Danish alliances, it but remains to wish that Princess Maud and Prince Charles, when once the sailor's knot is tied, will "live happily ever after."

THE MAKER OF MOONS.

By R. W. CHAMBERS.

I.

I have heard what the talkers were talking, the talk
Of the beginning and the end;
But I do not talk of the beginning or the end.

CONCERNING Yue-Laou and the Xin I know nothing more than you shall know. I am miserably anxious to clear the matter up. Perhaps what I write may save the United States Government money and lives, perhaps it may arouse the scientific world to action; at any rate it will put an end to the terrible suspense of two people. Certainty is better than suspense.

If the Government dares to disregard this warning and refuses to send a thoroughly equipped expedition at once, the people of the State may take swift vengeance on the whole region and leave a blackened devastated waste where to-day forest and flowering meadow land border the lake in the Cardinal Woods.

You already know part of the story; the New York papers have been full of alleged details. This much is true: Barris caught the "Shiner" red-handed, or, rather, yellow-handed, for his pockets and boots and dirty fists were stuffed with lumps of gold. I say gold advisedly. You may call it what you please. You also know how Barris was—but unless I begin at the beginning of my own experiences, you will be none the wiser after all.

On the 3rd of August of this present year I was standing in Tiffany's, chatting with George Godfrey, of the designing department. On the glass counter between us lay a coiled serpent, an exquisite specimen of chiselled gold.

"No," replied Godfrey to my question, "it isn't my work; I wish it was. Why, man, it's a masterpiece!"

"Whose?" I asked.

"Now I should be very glad to know also," said Godfrey. "We bought it from an old jay who says he lives in the country somewhere about the Cardinal Woods. That's near Starlit Lake, I believe——"

"Lake of the Stars?" I suggested.

"Some call it Starlit Lake—it's all the same. Well, my rustic Reuben says that he represents the sculptor of this snake for all practical and business purposes. He got his price, too. We hope he'll bring us something more. We have sold this already to the Metropolitan Museum."

I was leaning idly on the glass case, watching the keen eyes of the artist in precious metals as he stooped over the gold serpent.

"A masterpiece!" he muttered to himself, fondling the glittering coil. "Look at the texture! Whew!" But I was not looking at the serpent. Something was moving—crawling out of Godfrey's coat pocket—the pocket nearest to me—something soft and yellow with crab-like legs, all covered with coarse yellow hair.

"What in Heaven's name," said I, "have you got in your pocket? It's crawling out—it's trying to creep up your coat, Godfrey!"

He turned quickly and dragged the creature out with his left hand.

I shrank back as he held the repulsive object dangling before me, and he laughed and placed it on the counter.

"Did you ever see anything like that?" he demanded.

"No," said I truthfully; "and I hope I never shall again. What is it?"

"I don't know. Ask them at the Natural History Museum—they can't tell you. The Smithsonian is all at sea too. It is, I believe, the connecting link between a sea-urchin, a spider, and the devil. It looks venomous, but I can't find either fangs or mouth. Is it blind? These things may be eyes, but they look as if they were painted. A Japanese sculptor might have produced such an impossible beast, but it is hard to believe that God did. It looks unfinished too. I have a mad idea that this creature is only one of the parts of some larger and more grotesque organism—it looks so lonely, so hopelessly dependent, so cursedly unfinished. I'm going to use it as a model. If I don't out-Japanese the Japs my name isn't Godfrey."

The creature was moving slowly across the glass case towards me. I withdrew.

"Godfrey," I said, "I would execute a man who executed any such work as you propose. What do you want to perpetuate such a reptile for? I can stand the Japanese grotesque, but I can't stand that—spider——"

"It's a crab."

"Crab or spider or blind-worm—ugh! What do you want to do it for? It's a nightmare—it's unclean!"

I hated the thing. It was the first living creature that I had ever hated.

For some time I had noticed a damp acrid odour in the air, and Godfrey said it came from the reptile.

"Then kill it and bury it," I said; "and, by the way, where did it come from?"

"I don't know that either," laughed Godfrey; "I found it clinging to the box that this gold serpent was brought in. I suppose my old Reuben is responsible."

"If the Cardinal Woods are the lurking-places for things like this," said I, "I am sorry that I am going to the Cardinal Woods."

"Are you?" asked Godfrey; "for the shooting?"

"Yes, with Barris and Pierpont. Why don't you kill that creature?"

"Go off on your shooting trip, and let me alone," laughed Godfrey.

I shuddered at the "crab," and bade Godfrey good-bye until December.

That night, Pierpont, Barris, and I sat chatting in the smoking-car of the Quebec Express when the long train pulled out of the Grand Central Dépôt. Old David had gone forward with the dogs: poor things, they hated to ride in the baggage-car, but the Quebec and Northern road provides no sportsman's cars, and David and the three Gordon setters were in for an uncomfortable night.

Except for Pierpont, Barris, and myself, the car was empty. Barris, trim, stout, ruddy, and bronzed, sat drumming on the window-ledge, puffing a short fragrant pipe. His gun-case lay beside him on the floor.

"When *I* have white hair and years of discretion," said Pierpont languidly, "I'll not flirt with pretty serving-maids; will you, Roy?"

"No," said I, looking at Barris.

"You mean the maid with the cap in the Pullman car?" asked Barris.

"Yes," said Pierpont.

I smiled, for I had seen it also.

Barris twisted his crisp grey moustache, and yawned.

"You children had better be toddling off to bed," he said. "That lady's-maid is a member of the Secret Service."

"Oh!" said Pierpont, "one of your colleagues?"

"You might present us, you know," I said; "the journey is monotonous."

Barris had drawn a telegram from his pocket, and as he sat turning it over and over between his fingers he smiled. After a moment or two he handed it to Pierpont, who read it with slightly raised eyebrows.

"It's rot—I suppose it's cipher," he said; "I see it's signed by General Drummond——"

"Drummond, Chief of the Government Secret Service," said Barris.

"Something interesting?" I inquired, lighting a cigarette.

"Something so interesting," replied Barris, "that I'm going to look into it myself——"

"And break up our shooting trio——"

"No. Do you want to hear about it? Do you, Billy Pierpont?"

"Yes," replied that immaculate young man.

Barris rubbed the amber mouthpiece of his pipe on his handkerchief, cleared the stem with a bit of wire, puffed once or twice, and leaned back in his chair.

"Pierpont," he said, "do you remember that evening at the United States Club when General Miles, General Drummond, and I were examining that gold nugget that Captain Mahan had? You examined it also, I believe."

"I did," said Pierpont.

"Was it gold?" asked Barris, drumming on the window.

"It was," replied Pierpont.

"I saw it too," said I; "of course it was gold."

"Professor La Grange saw it also," said Barris; "he said it was gold."

"Well?" said Pierpont.

"Well," said Barris, "it was not gold."

After a silence Pierpont asked what tests had been made.

"The usual tests," replied Barris. "The United States Mint is satisfied that it is gold, so is every jeweller who has seen it. But it is not gold—and yet—it is gold."

Pierpont and I exchanged glances.

"Now," said I, "for Barris's usual coup-de-théâtre: what was the nugget?"

"Practically, it was pure gold; but," said Barris, enjoying the situation intensely, "really it was not gold. Pierpont, what is gold?"

"Gold's an element, a metal——"

"Wrong, Billy Pierpont!" said Barris coolly.

"Gold was an element when I went to school," said I,

"It has not been an element for two weeks," said Barris; "and, except General Drummond, Professor La Grange, and myself, you two youngsters are the only people, except one, in the world who know it or have known it."

"Do you mean to say that gold is a composite metal?" said Pierpont slowly.

"I do. La Grange has made it. He produced a scale of pure gold day before yesterday. That nugget was manufactured gold."

Could Barris be joking? Was this a colossal hoax? I looked at Pierpont. He muttered something about that settling the silver question, and turned his head to Barris; but there was that in Barris's face which forebade jesting, and Pierpont and I sat silently pondering.

"Don't ask me how it's made," said Barris quietly; "I don't know. But I do know that somewhere in the region of the Cardinal Woods there is a gang of people who do know how gold is made, and who make it. You understand the danger this is to every civilised nation. It's got to be stopped, of course. Drummond and I have decided that I am the man to stop it. Wherever and whoever these people are—these gold-makers—they must be caught, every one of them—caught or shot."

"Or shot," repeated Pierpont, who was owner of the Cross-Cut Gold Mine, and found his income too small. "Professor La Grange will of course be prudent; science need not know things that would upset the world!"

"Little Willy," said Barris, laughing, "your income is safe."

"I suppose," said I, "some flaw in the nugget gave Professor La Grange the tip."

"Exactly. He cut the flaw out before sending the nugget to be tested. He worked on the flaw and separated gold into its three elements."

"He is a great man," said Pierpont; "but he will be the greatest man in the world if he can keep his discovery to himself."

"Who?" said Barris.

"Professor La Grange.

"Professor La Grange was shot through the heart two hours ago," replied Barris slowly.

II.

We had been at the shooting-box in the Cardinal Woods five days when a telegram was brought to Barris by a mounted messenger from the nearest telegraph station, Cardinal Springs, a hamlet on the lumber railroad which joins the Quebec and Northern at Three Rivers Junction, thirty miles below.

Pierpont and I were sitting out under the trees, loading some special shells as experiments; Barris stood beside us, bronzed, erect, holding his pipe carefully so that no sparks would drift into our powder-box. The beat of hoofs over the grass aroused us, and when the lank messenger drew bridle before the door, Barris stepped forward and took the sealed telegram. When he had torn it open he went into the house and presently reappeared, reading something that he had written.

"This should go at once," he said, looking the messenger full in the face.

"At once, Colonel Barris," replied the shabby countryman.

Pierpont glanced up, and I smiled at the messenger who was gathering his bridle and settling himself in his stirrups. Barris handed him the written reply and nodded good-bye, there was a thud of hoofs on the greensward, a jingle of bit and spur across the gravel, and the messenger was gone. Barris's pipe went out, and he stepped to windward to relight it.

"It is queer," said I, "that your messenger, a battered native, should speak like a Harvard man."

"He is a Harvard man," said Barris.

"And the plot thickens," said Pierpont; "are the Cardinal Woods full of your Secret Service men, Barris?"

"No," replied Barris; "but the telegraph stations are. How many ounces of shot are you using, Roy?"

I told him, holding up the adjustable steel measuring-cup. He nodded. After a moment or two he sat down on a camp-stool beside us and picked up a crimper.

"That telegram was from Drummond," he said; "the messenger was one of my men, as you two bright little boys divined. Pooh! If he had spoken the Cardinal County dialect you wouldn't have known."

"His make-up was good," said Pierpont.

Barris twirled the crimper and looked at the pile of loaded shells. Then he picked up one and crimped it.

"Let 'em alone," said Pierpont; "you crimp too tight."

"Does his little gun kick when the shells are crimped too tight?" inquired Barris tenderly; "well, he shall crimp his own shells then—where's his little man?"

His little man was a weird English importation, stiff, very carefully scrubbed,

tangled in his aspirates, named Howlett. As valet, gillie, gun-bearer, and crimper he aided Pierpont to endure the ennui of existence by doing for him everything except breathing. Lately, however, Barris's taunts had driven Pierpont to do a few things for himself. To his astonishment he found that cleaning his own gun was not a bore, so he timidly loaded a shell or two, was much pleased with himself, loaded some more, crimped them, and went to breakfast with an appetite. So when Barras asked where "his little man" was, Pierpont did not reply, but dug a cupful of shot from the bag and poured it solemnly into the half-filled shell.

Old David came out with the dogs, and of course there was a pow-wow when Voyou, my Gordon, wagged his splendid tail across the loading-table, and sent a dozen unstopped cartridges rolling over the grass, vomiting powder and shot.

"Give the dogs a mile or two," said I; "we will shoot over the Sweet Fern Covert about four o'clock, David."

"Two guns, David," added Barris.

"Are you not going?" asked Pierpont, looking up as David disappeared with the dogs.

"Bigger game," said Barris shortly. He picked up a mug of ale from the tray which Howlett had just set down beside us, and took a long pull. We did the same, silently. Pierpont set his mug on the turf beside him and returned to his loading.

We spoke of the murder of Professor La Grange, of how it had been concealed by the authorities in New York at Drummond's request, of the certainty that it was one of the gang of gold-makers who had done it, and of the possible alertness of the gang.

"Oh, they know that Drummond will be after them sooner or later," said Barris; "but they don't know that the mills of the gods have already begun to grind. Those smart New York papers builded better than they knew when their ferret-eyed reporter poked his red nose into the house on 58th Street and sneaked off with a column on his cuffs about the 'suicide' of Professor La Grange. Billy Pierpont, my revolver is hanging in your room; I 'll take yours too——"

"Help yourself," said Pierpont.

"I shall be gone over night," continued Barris; "my poncho and some bread and meat are all I shall take except the barkers."

"Will they bark to-night?" I asked.

"No, I trust not for several weeks yet. I shall nose about a bit. Roy, did it ever strike you how queer it is that this wonderfully beautiful country should contain no inhabitants?"

"It 's like those splendid stretches of pools and rapids which one finds on every trout river, and in which one never finds a fish," suggested Pierpont.

"Exactly; and Heaven alone knows why," said Barris. "I suppose this country is shunned by human beings for the same mysterious reasons."

"The shooting is the better for it," I observed.

"The shooting is good," said Barris; "have you noticed the snipe on the meadow by the lake? Why, it 's brown with them! That 's a wonderful meadow."

"It 's a natural one," said Pierpont; "no human being ever cleared that land."

"Then it 's supernatural," said Barris. "Pierpont, do you want to come with me?"

Pierpont's handsome face flushed as he answered slowly, "It 's awfully good of you—if I may."

"Bosh!" said I, piqued because he had asked Pierpont. "What use is little Willy without his man?"

"True," said Barris gravely; "you can't take Howlett, you know."

Pierpont muttered something which ended in "d—n."

"Then," said I, "there will be but one gun on the Sweet Fern Covert this afternoon. Very well, I wish you joy of your cold supper and colder bed. Take your night-gown, Willy, and don't sleep on the damp ground."

"Let Pierpont alone," retorted Barris; "you shall go next time, Roy."

"Oh, all right; you mean when there 's shooting going on?"

"And I?" demanded Pierpont, grieved.

"You, too, my son; stop quarrelling! Will you ask Howlett to pack our kits—lightly, mind you—no bottles, they clink."

"My flask doesn't," said Pierpont, and went off to get ready for a night's stalking of dangerous men.

"It is strange," said I, "that nobody ever settles in this region. How many people live in Cardinal Springs, Barris?"

"Twenty, counting the telegraph operator and not counting the lumbermen; they are always changing and shifting. I have six men among them."

"Where have you no men? In the Four Hundred?"

"I have men there also—chums of Billy's, only he doesn't know it. David tells me that there was a strong flight of

woodcock last night. You ought to pick up some this afternoon."

Then we chatted about alder-cover and swamp until Pierpont came out of the house and it was time to part.

"Au revoir!" said Barris, buckling on his kit; "come along, Pierpont, and don't walk in the damp grass."

"If you are not back by to-morrow noon," said I, "I will take Howlett and David and hunt you up. You say your course is due north?"

"Due north," replied Barris, consulting his compass.

"There is a trail for two miles, and a spotted lead for two more," said Pierpont.

"Which we won't use for various reasons," added Barris pleasantly; "don't worry, Roy, and keep your confounded expedition out of the way; there's no danger."

He knew, of course, what he was talking about, and I held my peace.

When the tip end of Pierpont's shooting-coat had disappeared in the Long Covert, I found myself standing alone with Howlett. He bore my gaze for a moment, and then politely lowered his eyes.

"Howlett," said I, "take these shells and implements to the gun-room, and drop nothing. Did Voyou come to any harm in the briars this morning?"

"No 'arm, Mr. Cardenhe, Sir," said Howlett.

"Then be careful not to drop anything else," said I, and walked away, leaving him decorously puzzled. For he had dropped no cartridges. Poor Howlett!

III.

About four o'clock that afternoon I met David and his dogs at the spinney which leads into the Sweet Fern Covert. The three setters, Voyou, Gamin, and Mioche, were in fine feather. David had killed a woodcock and a brace of grouse over them that morning, and they were thrashing about the spinney at short range when I came up, gun under arm and pipe lighted.

"What's the prospect, David?" I asked, trying to keep my feet in the tangle of wagging, whining dogs. "Hello, what's amiss with Mioche?"

"A briar in his foot, Sir; I drew it and stopped the wound, but I guess the gravel's got in. If you have no objection, Sir, I might take him back with me."

"It's safer," I said. "Take Gamin too; I only want one dog this afternoon. What is the situation?"

"Fair, Sir; the grouse lie within a quarter of a mile of the oak second growth. The woodcock are mostly on the alders. I saw any number of snipe on the meadows. There's something else in by the lake—I can't just tell what, but the wood-duck set up a clatter when I was in the thicket, and they came dashing through the wood as if a dozen foxes was snappin' at their tail feathers."

"Probably a fox," I said; "leash those dogs—they must learn to stand it. I'll be back by dinner-time."

"There is one more thing, Sir," said David, lingering with his gun under his arm.

"Well," said I.

"I saw a man in the woods by the Oak Covert—at least, I think I did."

"A lumberman?"

"I think not, Sir—at least—do they have Chinamen among them?"

"Chinese? No. You didn't see a Chinaman in the woods here?"

"I—I think I did, Sir—I can't say positively. He was gone when I ran into the covert."

"Did the dogs notice it?"

"I can't say — exactly. They acted queer-like. Gamin here lay down and whined—it may have been colic—and Mioche whimpered—perhaps it was the briar."

"And Voyou?"

"Voyou, he was most remarkable, Sir, and the hair on his back stood up. I did see a ground-hog makin' for a tree near by."

"Then no wonder Voyou bristled. David, your Chinaman was a stump or tussock. Take the dogs now."

"I guess it was, Sir; good afternoon, Sir," said David, and walked away with the Gordons, leaving me alone with Voyou in the spinney.

I looked at the dog and he looked at me.

"Voyou!"

The dog sat down and danced with his fore-feet, his beautiful brown eyes sparkling.

"You're a fraud," I said; "which shall it be, the alders or the upland? Upland? Good!—now for the grouse — heel, my friend, and show your miraculous self-restraint."

Voyou wheeled into my tracks and followed close, nobly refusing to notice the impudent chipmunks and the thousand and one alluring and important smells which an ordinary dog would have lost no time in investigating.

The brown and yellow autumn woods were crisp with drifting heaps of leaves

and twigs that crackled under foot as we turned from the spinney into the forest. Every silent little stream hurrying toward the lake was gay with painted leaves afloat, scarlet maple or yellow oak. Spots of sunlight fell upon the pools, searching the brown depths, illuminating the gravel bottom where shoals of minnows swam to and fro, and to and fro again, busy with the purpose of their little lives. The crickets were chirping in the long brittle grass on the edge of the woods, but we left them far behind in the silence of the deeper forest.

"Now!" said I to Voyou.

The dog sprang to the front, circled once, zigzagged through the ferns around us, and, all in a moment, stiffened stock still, rigid as sculptured bronze. I stepped forward, raising my gun, two paces, three paces, ten, perhaps, before a great cock-grouse blundered up from the brake and burst through the thicket fringe toward the deeper growth. There was a flash and puff from my gun, a crash of echoes among the low wooded cliffs, and through the faint veil of smoke something dark dropped from mid-air amid a cloud of feathers, brown as the brown leaves underfoot.

"Fetch!"

Up from the ground sprang Voyou, and in a moment he came galloping back, neck arched, tail stiff but waving, holding tenderly in his pink mouth a mass of mottled bronzed feathers. Very gravely he laid the bird at my feet and crouched close beside it, his silky ears across his paws, his muzzle on the ground.

I dropped the grouse into my pocket, held for a moment a silent caressing communion with Voyou, then swung my gun under my arm and motioned the dog on.

It must have been five o'clock when I walked into a little opening in the woods and sat down to breathe. Voyou came and sat down in front of me.

"Well?" I inquired.

Voyou gravely presented one paw, which I took.

"We will never get back in time for dinner," said I, "so we might as well take it easy. It's all your fault, you know. Is there a briar in your foot? Let's see—there! it's out, my friend, and you are free to nose about and lick it. If you loll your tongue out, you'll get it all over twigs and moss. Can't you lie down and try to pant less? No, there is no use in sniffing and looking at that fern patch, for we are going to smoke a little, doze a little, and go home by moonlight. Think what a big dinner we will have! Think of Howlett's despair when we are not in time! Think of all the stories you will have to tell to Gamin and Mioche! Think what a good dog you have been! There! you are tired, old chap; take forty winks with me."

Voyou was a little tired. He stretched out on the leaves at my feet, but whether or not he really slept I could not be certain, until his hind legs twitched and I knew he was dreaming of mighty deeds.

Now I may have taken forty winks, but the sun seemed to be no lower when I sat up and unclosed my lids. Voyou raised his head, saw in my eyes that I was not going yet, thumped his tail half-a-dozen times on the dried leaves, and settled back with a sigh.

I looked lazily around, and for the first time noticed what a wonderfully beautiful spot I had chosen for a nap. It was an oval glade in the heart of the forest, level and carpeted with green grass. The trees that surrounded it were gigantic; they formed one towering circular wall of verdure, blotting out all except the turquoise blue of the sky-oval above. And now I noticed that in the centre of the greensward lay a pool of water, crystal clear, glimmering like a mirror in the meadow grass, beside a block of granite. It scarcely seemed possible that the symmetry of tree and lawn and lucent pool could have been one of nature's accidents. I had never before seen this glade, nor had I ever heard it spoken of by either Pierpont or Barris. It was a marvel, this diamond-clear basin, regular and graceful as a Roman fountain, set in the gem of turf. And these great trees, they also belonged not to America but to some legend-haunted forest of France, where moss-grown marbles stand neglected in dim glades and the twilight of the forest shelters fairies and slender shapes from shadow-land.

I lay and watched the sunlight showering the tangled thicket where masses of crimson cardinal flowers glowed, or where one long dusty sunbeam tipped the edge of the floating leaves in the pool, turning them to palest gilt. There were birds, too, passing through the dim avenues of trees like jets of flame—the gorgeous cardinal-bird in his deep-stained crimson robe, the bird that gave to the woods, to the village fifteen miles away, to the whole country the name of Cardinal.

I rolled over on my back and looked up at the sky. How pale—paler than a robin's egg—it was! I seemed to be

HER HAMMER FELL INTO THE FOUNTAIN, AND I LEANED OVER AND PLUNGED MY ARM INTO THE WATER TO FIND IT.

lying at the bottom of a well, walled with verdure, high-towering on every side. And as I lay, all about me the air became sweet-scented. Sweeter and sweeter and more penetrating grew the perfume, and I wondered what stray breeze, blowing over acres of lilies, could have brought it. But there was no breeze—the air was still. A gilded fly alighted on my hand—a honey-fly. It was as troubled as I by the scented silence.

Then, behind me, my dog growled.

I sat quite still at first, hardly breathing, but my eyes were fixed on a shape that moved along the edge of the pool among the meadow grasses. The dog had ceased growling, and was now staring, alert and trembling.

At last I rose and walked rapidly down to the pool, my dog following close to heel.

The figure, a woman's, turned slowly toward us.

IV.

She was standing still when I approached the pool. The forest around us was so silent that when I spoke the sound of my own voice startled me.

"No," she said, and her voice was smooth as flowing water, "I have not lost my way. Will he come to me—your beautiful dog?"

Before I could speak, Voyou crept to her and laid his silky head against her knees.

"But surely," said I, "you did not come here alone?"

"Alone? I did come alone."

"But the nearest settlement is Cardinal, probably nineteen miles from where we are standing."

"I do not know Cardinal," she said.

"Ste. Croix in Canada is forty miles, at least. How did you come into the Cardinal Woods?" I asked, amazed.

"Into the woods?" she repeated a little impatiently.

"Yes."

She did not answer at first, but stood caressing Voyou with gentle phrase and gesture.

"Your beautiful dog I am fond of, but I am not fond of being questioned," she said quietly. "My name is Ysonde, and I came to the fountain here to see your dog"

I was properly quenched. After a moment or two I did say that in another hour it would be growing dusky, but she neither replied nor looked at me.

"This," I ventured, "is a beautiful pool—you call it a fountain—a delicious fountain: I have never before seen it. It is hard to imagine that nature did all this."

"Is it?" she said.

"Don't you think so?" I asked.

"I haven't thought; I wish when you go you would leave me your dog."

"My—my dog?"

"If you don't mind," she said sweetly, and looked at me for the first time in the face.

For an instant our glances met, then she grew grave, and I saw that her eyes were fixed on my forehead. Suddenly she rose and drew nearer, looking intently at my forehead. There was a faint mark there, a tiny crescent, just over my eyebrow.

It was a birth-mark.

"Is that a scar?" she demanded, drawing nearer.

"That crescent-shaped mark? No."

"No! Are you sure?" she insisted.

"Perfectly," I replied, astonished.

"A—a birth-mark?"

"Yes; may I ask why?"

As she drew away from me, I saw that the colour had fled from her cheeks. For a second she clasped both hands over her eyes, as if to shut out my face; then, slowly dropping her hands, she sat down on a long square block of stone which half encircled the basin, and on which, to my amazement, I saw carving. Voyou went to her again and laid his head in her lap.

"What is your name?" she asked at length.

"Roy Cardenhe."

"Mine is Ysonde. I carved these dragon-flies on the stone, these fishes and shells and butterflies you see."

"You! They are wonderfully delicate; but those are not American dragon-flies."

"No; they are more beautiful. See, I have my hammer and chisel with me."

She drew from a queer pouch at her side a small hammer and chisel, and held them toward me.

"You are very talented," I said; "where did you study?"

"I? I never studied—I knew how. I saw things and cut them out of stone. Do you like them? Some time I will show you other things that I have done. If I had a great lump of bronze I could make your dog, beautiful as he is."

Her hammer fell into the fountain, and I leaned over and plunged my arm into the water to find it.

"It is there, shining on the sand," she said, leaning over the pool with me.

"Where?" said I, looking at our reflected faces in the water. For it was only in the water that I had dared, as yet, to look her long in the face.

The pool mirrored the exquisite oval of her head, the heavy hair, the eyes. I heard the silken rustle of her girdle, I caught the flash of a white arm, and the hammer was drawn up dripping with spray.

The troubled surface of the pool grew calm, and again I saw her eyes reflected.

"Listen," she said in a low voice, "do you think you will come again to my fountain?"

"I will come," I said. My voice was dull; the noise of waters filled my ears.

Then a swift shadow sped across the pool; I rubbed my eyes. Where her reflected face had bent beside mine there was nothing mirrored but the rosy evening sky with one pale star glimmering. I drew myself up and turned. She was gone. I saw the faint star twinkling above me in the afterglow, I saw the tall trees motionless in the still evening air, I saw my dog slumbering at my feet.

The sweet scent in the air had faded, leaving in my nostrils the heavy odour of fern and forest mould. A blind fear seized me, and I caught up my gun and sprang into the darkening woods. The dog followed me, crashing through the undergrowth at my side. Duller and duller grew the light; but I strode on, the sweat pouring from my face and hair, my mind a chaos. How I reached the spinney I can hardly tell. As I turned up the path I caught a glimpse of a human face peering at me from the darkening thicket—a horrible human face, yellow and drawn, with high-boned cheeks and narrow eyes.

Involuntarily I halted; the dog at my heels snarled. Then I sprang straight at it, floundering blindly through the thicket; but the night had fallen swiftly, and I found myself panting and struggling in a maze of twisted shrubbery and twining vines, unable to see the very undergrowth that ensnared me.

It was a pale face, and a scratched one, that I carried to a late dinner that night. Howlett served me, dumb reproach in his eyes, for the soup had been standing and the grouse was juiceless.

David brought the dogs in after they had had their supper, and I drew my chair before the blaze and set my ale on a table beside me. The dogs curled up at my feet, blinking gravely at the sparks that snapped and flew in eddying showers from the heavy birch logs.

"David," said I, "did you say you saw a Chinaman to-day?"

"I did, Sir."

"What do you think about it now?"

"I may have been mistaken, Sir——"

"But you think not. What sort of whisky did you put in my flask to-day?"

"The usual, Sir."

"Is there much gone?"

"About three swallows, Sir, as usual."

"You don't suppose there could have been any mistake about that whisky; no medicine could have gotten into it, for instance."

David smiled and said, "No, Sir."

"Well," said I, "I have had an extraordinary dream."

When I said "dream," I felt comforted and reassured. I had scarcely dared to say it before, even to myself.

"An extraordinary dream," I repeated; "I fell asleep in the woods about five o'clock, in that pretty glade where the fountain—I mean the pool is. You know the place?"

"I do not, Sir."

I described it minutely twice, but David shook his head.

"Carved stone, did you say, Sir? I never chanced on it. You don't mean the New Spring——"

"No, no! This glade is away beyond that. Is it possible that any people inhabit the forest between here and the Canada line?"

"Nobody short of Ste. Croix; at least I have no knowledge of any."

"Of course," said I, "when I thought I saw a Chinaman, it was imagination. Of course I had been more impressed than I was aware of by your adventure. Of course you saw no Chinaman, David."

"Probably not, Sir," replied David dubiously.

I sent him off to bed, saying I should keep the dogs with me all night. And when he was gone I took a good long draught of ale, "just to shame the devil," as Pierpont said, and lighted a cigar. Then I thought of Barris and Pierpont and their cold bed, for I knew they would not dare build a fire, and, in spite of the hot chimney corner and the crackling blaze, I shivered in sympathy.

"I'll tell Barris and Pierpont the whole story, and take them to see the carved stone and the fountain," I thought to myself; "what a marvellous dream it was—Ysonde—if it was a dream!"

Then I went to the mirror and examined the faint white mark above my eyebrow.

V.

About eight o'clock next morning, as I sat listlessly eyeing my coffee-cup which Howlett was filling, Gamin and Mioche set up a howl, and in a moment more I heard Barris's step on the porch.

"Hello, Roy!" said Pierpont, stamping into the dining-room, "I want my breakfast, by jingo! Where's Howlett? None of your *café-au-lait* for me—I want a chop and some eggs. Look at that dog—he'll wag the hinge off his tail in a moment——"

"Pierpont," said I, "this loquacity is astonishing but welcome. Where's Barris? You are soaked from neck to ankle."

Pierpont sat down and tore off his stiff muddy leggings.

"Barris is telephoning to Cardinal Springs—I believe he wants some of his men. Down, Gamin, you idiot! Howlett, three eggs poached and more toast! What was I saying? Oh, about Barris—he's struck something or other which he hopes will locate these gold-making fellows. I had a jolly time—he'll tell you about it."

"Billy! Billy!" I said in pleased amazement, "you are learning to talk! Dear me! You load your own shells and you carry your own gun and you fire it yourself. Hello! here's Barris all over mud. You fellows really ought to change your rig. Whew! what a frightful odour!"

"It's probably this," said Barris, tossing something on to the hearth, where it shuddered for a moment and then began to writhe. "I found it in the woods by the lake. Do you know what it can be, Roy?"

To my disgust I saw it was another of those spidery, wormy, crab-like creatures Godfrey had in Tiffany's.

"I thought I recognised that acrid odour," I said. "For the love of the saints take it away from the breakfast-table, Barris!"

"But what is it?" he persisted, unslinging his field-glass and revolver.

"I'll tell you what I know after breakfast," I replied firmly. "Howlett, get a broom and sweep that thing into the road. What are you laughing at, Pierpont?"

Howlett swept the repulsive creature out, and Barris and Pierpont went to change their dew-soaked clothes for drier raiment. David came to take the dogs for an airing, and in a few minutes Barris reappeared and sat down in his place at the head of the table.

"Well," said I, "is there a story to tell?"

"Yes; not much. They are near the lake on the other side of the woods—I mean these gold-makers. I shall collar one of them this evening. I haven't located the main gang with any certainty—shove the toast-rack this way, will you, Roy—no, I am not at all certain, but I've nailed one anyway. Pierpont was a great help, really—and, what do you think, Roy? He wants to join the Secret Service!"

"Little Willy!"

"Exactly. Oh, I'll dissuade him. What sort of a reptile was that I brought in?" Did Howlett sweep it away?"

"He can sweep it back again for all I care," I said indifferently, "I've finished my breakfast."

"No," said Barris, hastily swallowing his coffee, "it's of no importance; you can tell me about the beast——"

"Serve you right if I had it brought in on toast," I returned.

Pierpont came in radiant, fresh from the bath.

"Go on with your story, Roy," he said; and I told them about Godfrey and his reptile pet.

"Now, what in the name of common sense can Godfrey find interesting in that creature?" I ended, tossing my cigarette into the fireplace.

"It's Japanese, don't you think?" said Pierpont.

"No," said Barris, "it is not artistically grotesque, it's vulgar and horrible—it looks cheap and unfinished——"

"Unfinished—exactly," said I, "like an American humorist——"

"Yes," said Pierpont, "cheap. What about that gold serpent?"

"Oh, the Metropolitan Museum bought it. You must see it—it's marvellous!"

Barris and Pierpont had lighted their cigarettes, and after a moment we all rose and strolled out to the lawn, where chairs and hammocks were placed under the maple-trees.

David passed, gun under arm, dogs heeling.

"Three guns on the meadows at four this afternoon," said Pierpont.

"Roy," said Barris as David bowed and started on, "what did you do yesterday?"

This was the question that I had been expecting. All night long I had dreamed of Ysonde and the glade in the woods, where, at the bottom of the crystal fountain, I saw the reflection of her eyes. All the morning while bathing and dressing I had been persuading myself that the dream was not worth recounting, and that a search for the glade and the imaginary stone carving would be ridiculous. But now, as Barris

asked the question, I suddenly decided to tell him the whole story.

"See here, you fellows!" I said abruptly, "I am going to tell you something queer. You can laugh as much as you please to, but first I want to ask Barris a question or two. You have been in China, Barris?"

"Yes," said Barris, looking straight into my eyes.

"Would a Chinaman be likely to turn lumberman?"

"Have you seen a Chinaman?" he asked in a quiet voice.

"I don't know. David and I both imagined we did."

Barris and Pierpont exchanged glances.

"Have you seen one also?" I demanded, turning to include Pierpont.

"No," said Barris slowly; "but I know that there is, or has been, a Chinaman in these woods."

"The devil!" said I.

"Yes," said Barris gravely, "the devil, if you like—a devil—a member of the Kuen-Yuin."

I drew my chair close to the hammock where Pierpont lay at full length, holding out to me a ball of pure gold.

"Well?" said I, examining the engraving on its surface, which represented a mass of twisted creatures—dragons, I supposed.

"Well," repeated Barris, extending his hand to take the golden ball, "this globe of gold engraved with reptiles and Chinese hieroglyphics is the symbol of the Kuen-Yuin."

"Where did you get it?" I asked, feeling that something startling was impending.

"Pierpont found it by the lake at sunrise this morning. It is the symbol of the Kuen-Yuin," he repeated; "the terrible Kuen-Yuin, the sorcerers of China, and the most murderously diabolical sect on earth."

We puffed our cigarettes in silence until Barris rose, and began to pace backward and forward among the trees, twisting his grey moustache.

"The Kuen-Yuin are sorcerers," he said, pausing before the hammock where Pierpont lay watching him; "I mean exactly what I say—sorcerers. I've seen them—I've seen them at their devilish business, and I repeat to you solemnly, that as there are angels above, there is a race of devils on earth, and they are sorcerers. Bah!" he cried, "talk to me of Indian magic and Yogis and all that clap-trap! Why, Roy, I tell you that the Kuen-Yuin have absolute control of a hundred millions of people, mind and body, body and soul. Do you know what goes on in the interior of China? Does Europe know—could any human being conceive of the condition of that gigantic hell-pit? You read the papers, you hear diplomatic twaddle about Li-Hung-Chang and the Emperor, you see accounts of battles on sea and land, and you know that Japan has raised a toy tempest along the jagged edge of the great unknown; but you never before heard of the Kuen-Yuin; no, nor has any European except a stray missionary or two; and yet I tell you that when the fires from this pit of hell have eaten through the continent to the coast, the explosion will inundate half a world—and God help the other half!"

Pierpont's cigarette went out; he lighted another, and looked hard at Barris.

"But," resumed Barris quietly, "'sufficient unto the day,' you know—I didn't intend to say as much as I did—it would do no good—even you and Pierpont will forget it—it seems so impossible and so far away—like the burning out of the sun. What I want to discuss is the possibility or probability of a Chinaman—a member of the Kuen-Yuin, being here, at this moment, in the forest."

"If he is," said Pierpont, "possibly the gold-makers owe their discovery to him."

"I do not doubt it for a second," said Barris earnestly.

I took the little golden globe in my hand, and examined the characters engraved upon it.

"Barris," said Pierpont, "I can't believe in sorcery while I am wearing one of Sanford's shooting-suits, in the pocket of which rests an uncut volume of the 'Duchess.'"

"Neither can I," I said; "for I read the *Evening Post*, and I know Mr. Godkin would not allow it. Hello! What's the matter with this gold ball?"

"What is the matter?" said Barris grimly.

"Why — why—it's changing colour—purple—no, crimson—no, it's green I mean—good Heavens! these dragons are twisting under my fingers——"

"Impossible!" muttered Pierpont, leaning over me; "those are not dragons——"

"No!" I cried excitedly; "they are pictures of that reptile that Barris brought back — see — see — how they crawl and turn——'

"Drop it!" commanded Barris; and I threw the ball on the turf. In an instant we had all knelt down on the grass beside it; but the globe was again golden,

grotesquely wrought with dragons and strange signs.

Pierpont, a little red in the face, picked it up, and handed it to Barris. He placed it on a chair, and sat down beside me.

"Whew!" said I, wiping the perspiration from my face, "how did you play us that trick, Barris?"

"Trick?" said Barris contemptuously.

I looked at Pierpont, and my heart sank. If this was not a trick, what was it? Pierpont returned my glance and coloured; but all he said was, "It's devilish queer," and Barris answered, "Yes, devilish." Then Barris asked me again to tell my story, and I did, beginning from the time I met David in the spinney to the moment when I sprang into the darkening thicket where that yellow mask had grinned like a phantom skull.

"Shall we try to find the fountain?" I asked after a pause.

"Yes—and—er—the lady," suggested Pierpont vaguely.

"Don't be an ass," I said, a little impatiently; "you need not come, you know."

"Oh, I'll come," said Pierpont, "unless you think I am indiscreet——"

"Shut up, Pierpont," said Barris, "this thing is serious; I never heard of such a glade or such a fountain, but it's true that nobody knows this forest thoroughly. It's worth while trying for. Roy, can you find your way back to it?"

"Easily," I answered; "when shall we go?"

"It will knock our snipe-shooting on the head," said Pierpont; "but then when one has the opportunity of finding a live dream-lady——"

I rose, deeply offended, but Pierpont was not very penitent, and his laughter was irresistible.

"The lady's yours by right of discovery," he said; "I'll promise not to infringe on your dreams—I'll dream about other ladies——"

"Come, come," said I, "I'll have Howlett to put you to bed in a minute. Barris, if you are ready—we can get back to dinner——"

Barris had risen, and was gazing at me earnestly.

"What's the matter?" I asked nervously, for I saw that his eyes were fixed on my forehead, and I thought of Ysonde and the white crescent scar.

"Is that a birth-mark?" said Barris.

"Yes; why, Barris?"

"Nothing — an interesting coincidence——"

"What?—for Heaven's sake!"

"The scar, or rather the birth-mark. It is the print of the dragon's claw, the crescent symbol of Yue-Laou——"

"And who the devil is Yue-Laou?" I said crossly.

"Yue-Laou, the Moon Maker, Dzil-Nbu of the Kuen-Yuin. It's Chinese mythology, but it is believed that Yue-Laou has returned to rule the Kuen-Yuin."

"The conversation," interrupted Pierpont, "smacks of peacocks' feathers and yellow jackets. The chicken-pox has left its card on Roy, and Barris is guying us. Come on, you fellows, and make your call on the dream-lady. Barris, I hear galloping. Here come your men!"

Two mud-splashed riders clattered up to the porch and dismounted at a motion from Barris. I noticed that both of them carried repeating rifles and heavy Colt's revolvers.

They followed Barris deferentially into the dining-room, and presently we heard the tinkle of plates and bottles and the low hum of Barris's musical voice.

Half-an-hour later they came out again, saluted Pierpont and me, and galloped away in the direction of the Canadian frontier. Ten minutes passed, and, as Barris did not appear, we rose and went into the house to find him. He was sitting silently before the table, watching the small golden globe, now glowing with scarlet and orange fire, brilliant as a live coal. Howlett, mouth ajar and eyes starting from the sockets, stood petrified behind him.

"Are you coming?" asked Pierpont, a little startled. Barris did not answer. The globe slowly turned to pale gold again, but the face that Barris raised to ours was white as a sheet. Then he stood up and smiled with an effort that was painful to us all.

"Give me a pencil and a bit of paper," he said.

Howlett brought it. Barris went to the window and wrote rapidly. He folded the paper, placed it in the top drawer of his desk, locked the drawer, handed me the key, and motioned us to precede him.

When again we stood under the maples, he turned to me with an impenetrable expression.

"You will know when to use the key," he said. "Come, Pierpont, we must try to find Roy's fountain."

VI.

At two o'clock that afternoon, at Barris's suggestion, we gave up the search for the fountain in the glade and cut across the

forest to the spinney, where David and Howlett were waiting with our guns and the three dogs.

Pierpont guyed me unmercifully about the "dream-lady," as he called her, and but for the significant coincidence of Ysonde's and Barris's questions concerning the white scar on my forehead, I should long ago have been perfectly persuaded that I had dreamed the whole thing. As it was, I had no explanation to offer. We had not been able to find the glade, although fifty times I came to landmarks which convinced me that we were just about to enter it. Barris was quiet, scarcely uttering a word to either of us during the entire search. I had never before seen him depressed in spirits. However, when we came in sight of the spinney, where a cold bit of grouse and a bottle of Burgundy awaited each, Barris seemed to recover his habitual good-humour.

"Here's to the dream-lady!" said Pierpont, raising his glass and standing up.

I did not like it. Even if she was only a dream, it irritated me to hear Pierpont's mocking voice. Perhaps Barris understood—I don't know, but he bade Pierpont drink his wine without further noise, and that young man obeyed with a childlike confidence which almost made Barris smile.

"What about the snipe, David?" I asked; "the meadows should be in good condition."

"There is not a snipe on the meadows, Sir," said David solemnly.

"Impossible!" exclaimed Barris, "they can't have left."

"They have, Sir," said David in a sepulchral voice which I hardly recognised.

We all three looked at the old man curiously, waiting for his explanation of this disappointing but sensational report.

David looked at Howlett and Howlett examined the sky.

"I was going," began the old man, with his eyes fastened on Howlett, "I was going along by the spinney with the dogs when I heard a noise in the covert and I seen Howlett come walkin' very fast toward me. In fact," continued David, "I may say he was runnin'. Was you runnin', Howlett?"

Howlett said "Yes," with a decorous cough.

"I beg pardon," said David, "but I'd rather Howlett told the rest. He saw things which I did not."

"Go on, Howlett," commanded Pierpont, much interested.

Howlett coughed again behind his large red hand.

"What David says is true, Sir," he began. "I hobserved the dogs at a distance 'ow they was a-workin', Sir, and David stood a-lightin' of 's pipe be'ind the spotted beech, when I see a 'ead pop up in the covert 'oldin' a stick like 'e was haimin' at the dogs, Sir——"

"A head holding a stick?" said Pierpont severely.

"The 'ead 'ad 'ands, Sir," explained Howlett, "'ands that 'eld a painted stick—like that, Sir. 'Owlett, thinks I to meself, this 'ere 's queer, so I jumps in and runs, but the beggar 'e seen me, an' w'en I comes alongside of David 'e was gone. ''Ello, 'Owlett,' sez David, 'what the 'ell'—I beg pardon, Sir,—''ow did you come 'ere,' sez 'e very loud. 'Run,' sez I, 'the Chinaman is harryin' the dawgs!' 'For Gawd's sake, wot Chinaman?' sez David, haimin' 'is gun at every bush. Then I thinks I see 'm, an' we run an' run, the dawgs a-boundin' close to heel, Sir; but we don't see no Chinaman."

"I 'll tell the rest," said David, as Howlett coughed and stepped in a modest corner behind the dogs.

"Go on," said Barris in a strange voice.

"Well, Sir, when Howlett and I stopped chasin' we were on the cliff overlooking the south meadow. I noticed that there was hundreds of birds there, mostly yellow-legs and plover, and Howlett seen them too. Then before I could say a word to Howlett, something out in the lake gave a splash—a splash as if the whole cliff had fallen into the water. I was that scared that I jumped straight into the bush, and Howlett, he sat down quick, and all those snipe wheeled up—there was hundreds—all a-squealin' with fright, and the wood-duck came bowlin' over the meadows as if the Old Nick was behind."

David paused and glanced meditatively at the dogs.

"Go on," said Barris, in the same strained voice.

"Nothing more, Sir. The snipe did not come back."

"But that splash in the lake?"

"I don't know what it was, Sir."

"A salmon? A salmon wouldn't have frightened the duck and the snipe that way!"

"No—oh, no, Sir. If fifty salmon had jumped they couldn't have made that splash. Could they, Howlett?"

"No 'ow," said Howlett.

"Roy," said Barris at length, "what David tells us settles the snipe-shooting

for to-day. I am going to take Pierpont up to the house. Howlett and David will follow with the dogs; I have something to say to them. If you care to come, come along; if not, go and shoot a brace of grouse for dinner, and be back by eight if you want to see what Pierpont and I discovered last night."

David whistled Gamin and Mioche to heel and followed Howlett and his hamper toward the house. I called Voyou to my side, picked up my gun and turned to Barris.

"I will be back by eight," I said; "you are expecting to catch one of the gold-makers, are you not?"

"Yes," said Barris listlessly.

Pierpont began to speak about the Chinaman; but Barris motioned him to follow, and, nodding to me, took the path that Howlett and David had followed toward the house. When they disappeared I tucked my gun under my arm and turned sharply into the forest, Voyou trotting close to my heels.

In spite of myself the continued apparition of the Chinaman made me nervous. If he troubled me again I had fully decided to get the drop on him and find out what he was doing in the Cardinal Woods. If he could give no satisfactory account of himself I would march him in to Barris as a gold-making suspect—I would march him in anyway, I thought, and rid the forest of his ugly face. I wondered what it was that David had heard in the lake. It must have been a big fish, a salmon, I thought; probably David's and Howlett's nerves were overwrought after their Celestial chase.

A whine from the dog broke the thread of my meditation, and I raised my head. Then I stopped short in my tracks.

The lost glade lay straight before me.

Already the dog had bounded into it across the velvet turf to the carved stone, where a slim figure sat. I saw my dog lay his silky head lovingly against her silken kirtle, I saw her face bend above him, and I caught my breath and slowly entered the sunlit glade.

Half timidly she held out one white hand.

"Now that you have come," she said, "I can show you more of my work. I told you that I could do other things besides these dragon-flies and moths carved here in stone. Why do you stare at me so? Are you ill?"

"Ysonde," I stammered,

"Yes," she said, with a faint colour under her eyes

"I—I never expected to see you again," I blurted out; "you—I—I—thought I had dreamed—— "

"Dreamed—of me? Perhaps you did. Is that strange?"

"Strange? N—no, but—where did you go when—when we were leaning over the fountain together? I saw your face—your face reflected beside mine, and then—then suddenly I saw the blue sky and only a star twinkling."

"It was because you fell asleep," she said, "was it not?"

"I—asleep?"

"You slept—I thought you were very tired, and I went back——"

"Back!—where?"

"Back to my home where I carve my beautiful images; see, here is one I brought to show you to-day."

I took the sculptured creature that she held toward me, a massive golden lizard with frail claw-spread wings of gold so thin that the sunlight burned through and fell on the ground in flaming gilded patches.

"Good Heavens!" I exclaimed, "this is astounding! Where did you learn to do such work? Ysonde, such a thing is beyond price!"

"Oh, I hope so," she said earnestly, "I can't bear to sell my work, but my step-father takes it and sends it away. This is the second thing I have done, and yesterday he said I must give it to him. I suppose he is poor."

"I don't see how he can be poor if he gives you gold to model in," I said, astonished.

"Gold!" she exclaimed, "gold! he has a room full of gold! He makes it."

I sat down on the turf at her feet, completely unnerved.

"Why do you look at me so?" she asked, a little troubled.

"Where does your step-father live?" I said at last.

"Here."

"Here!"

"In the woods near the lake. You could never find our house."

"A house!"

"Of course. Do you think I lived in a tree? How silly! I live with my step-father in a beautiful house—a small house, but very beautiful. He makes his gold there, but the men who carry it away never come to the house, for they don't know where it is, and if they did they could not get in. My step-father carries the gold in lumps to a canvas satchel. When the satchel is full he takes it out into the

woods where the men live, and I don't know what they do with it. I wish he could sell the gold and become rich, for then I could go back to Yian, where all the gardens are sweet and the river flows under the thousand bridges."

"Where is this city?" I asked faintly.

"Yian? I don't know. It is sweet with perfume and the sound of silver bells all day long. Yesterday I carried a blossom of dried lotus buds from Yian in my breast, and all the woods were fragrant. Did you smell it?"

"Yes."

"I wondered last night whether you did. How beautiful your dog is! I love him. Yesterday I thought most about your dog, but last——"

"Last night," I repeated below my breath.

"I thought of you. Why do you wear the dragon-claw?"

I raised my hand impulsively to my forehead, covering the scar.

"What do you know of the dragon-claw?" I muttered.

"It is the symbol of Yue-Laou, and Yue-Laou rules the Kuen-Yuin, my step-father says. My step-father tells me everything that I know. We lived in Yian until I was sixteen years old. I am eighteen now; that is two years we have lived in the forest. Look! see those scarlet birds! what are they? There are birds of the same colour in Yian."

"Where is Yian, Ysonde?" I asked with deadly calmness.

"Yian? I don't know."

"But you have lived there?"

"Yes, a very long time."

"Is it across the ocean, Ysonde?"

"It is across seven oceans and the great river which is longer than from the earth to the moon."

"Who told you that?"

"Who? My step-father; he tells me everything."

"Will you tell me his name, Ysonde?"

"I don't know it; he's my step-father: that is all."

"And what is your name?"

"You know it—Ysonde."

"Yes, but what other name?"

"That is all—Ysonde. Have you two names? Why do you look at me so impatiently?"

"Does your step-father make gold? Have you seen him make it?"

"Oh, yes. He made it also in Yian, and I loved to watch the sparks at night whirling like golden bees. Yian is lovely if it is all like our garden and the gardens around. I can see the thousand bridges from my garden and the white mountain beyond——"

"And the people—tell me of the people, Ysonde!" I urged gently.

"The people of Yian? I could see them in swarms like ants—oh! many, many millions crossing and recrossing the thousand bridges."

"But how did they look? Did they dress as I do?"

"I don't know. They were very far away, moving specks on the thousand bridges. For sixteen years I saw them every day from my garden, but I never went out of my garden into the streets of Yian, for my stepfather forbade me."

"You never saw a living creature near by in Yian?" I asked in despair.

"My birds; oh! such tall, wise-looking birds, all over grey and rose colour."

She leaned over the gleaming water and drew her polished hand across the surface.

"Why do you ask me these questions?" she murmured. "Are you displeased?"

"Tell me about your step-father," I insisted. "Does he look as I do? Does he dress, does he speak, as I do? Is he American?"

"American? I don't know. He does not dress as you do, and he does not look as you do. He is old—very, very old. He speaks sometimes as you do, sometimes as they do in Yian. I speak also in both manners."

"Then speak as they do in Yian," I urged impatiently; "speak as —— Why, Ysonde, why are you crying? Have I hurt you? I did not intend—I did not dream of your caring—there, Ysonde, forgive me! See, I beg you on my knees here at your feet."

I stopped, my eyes fastened on a small golden ball which hung from her waist by a golden chain. I saw it trembling against her thigh; I saw it change colour, now crimson, now purple, now flaming scarlet. It was the symbol of the Kuen-Yuin.

She bent over me and laid her fingers gently on my arm.

"Why do you ask me such things?" she said, while the tears glistened on her lashes. "It hurts me here"—she pressed her hand to her breast—"it pains; I don't know why. Ah! now your eyes are hard and cold again. You are looking at the golden globe which hangs from my waist. Do you wish to know also what that is?"

"Yes," I muttered, my eyes fixed on the infernal colour flames which subsided as I spoke, leaving the ball a pale gilt again.

"It is the symbol of the Kuen-Yuin," she said in a trembling voice. "Why do you ask?"

"Is it yours?"

"Y—yes."

"Where did you get it?" I cried harshly.

"My—my step-fa——"

Then she pushed me away from her with all the strength of her slender wrists, and covered her face.

If I slipped my arm about her and drew her to me, if I kissed away the tears that fell slowly between her fingers—if I told her how I loved her, how it cut me to the heart to see her unhappy—after all, that is my own business. When she smiled through her tears, the pure love and sweetness in her eyes lifted my soul higher than the high moon vaguely glimmering through the sunlit blue above. My happiness was so sudden, so fierce and overwhelming, that I only knelt there, her fingers clasped in mine, my eyes raised to the blue vault and the glimmering moon. Then something in the long grass beside me moved close to my knees and a damp acrid odour filled my nostrils.

"Ysonde!" I cried; but the touch of her hand was already gone, and my two clenched fists were cold and damp with dew.

"Ysonde!" I called again, my tongue stiff with fright; but I called as one awaking from a dream—a horrid dream, for my nostrils quivered with the damp acrid odour, and I felt the crab-reptile clinging to my knee. Why had the night fallen so swiftly—and where was I—where?—stiff, chilled, torn, and bleeding, lying flung like a corpse over my own threshold, with Voyou licking my face and Barris stooping above me in the light of a lamp that flared and smoked in the night breeze like a torch. Faugh! the choking stench of the lamp aroused me and I cried out—

"Ysonde!"

"What the devil's the matter with him?" muttered Pierpont, lifting me in his arms like a child; "has he been stabbed, Barris?"

VII.

In a few minutes I was able to stand and walk stiffly into my bed-room, where Howlett had a hot bath ready and a hotter tumbler of Scotch. Pierpont sponged the blood from my throat, where it had coagulated. The cut was slight, almost invisible, a mere puncture from a thorn. A shampoo cleared my mind, and a cold plunge and alcohol friction did the rest.

"Now," said Pierpont, "swallow your hot Scotch, and lie down. Do you want a broiled woodcock? Good, I fancy you are coming about."

Barris and Pierpont watched me as I sat on the edge of the bed, solemnly chewing on the woodcock's wishbone and sipping my Bordeaux, very much at my ease.

Pierpont sighed his relief.

"So," he said pleasantly, "it was a mere case of ten dollars or ten days. I thought you had been stabbed——"

"I was not intoxicated," I replied, serenely picking up a bit of celery.

"Only jagged?" inquired Pierpont, full of sympathy.

"Nonsense," said Barris; "let him alone. Want some more celery, Roy? It will make you sleep."

"I don't want to sleep," I answered; "when are you and Pierpont going to catch your Goldmaker?"

Barris looked at his watch and closed it with a snap.

"In an hour; you don't propose to go with us?"

"But I do; toss me a cup of coffee, Pierpont, will you; that's just what I propose to do. Howlett, bring the new box of Panatellas—the mild imported—and leave the decanter. Now, Barris, I'll be dressing, and you and Pierpont keep still and listen to what I have to say. Is that door shut tight?"

Barris locked it and sat down.

"Thanks," said I; "Barris, where is the city of Yian?"

An expression akin to terror flashed into Barris's eyes, and I saw him stop breathing for a moment.

"There is no such city," he said at length; "have I been talking in my sleep?"

"It is a city," I continued calmly, "where the river winds under the thousand bridges, where the gardens are sweet-scented and the air is filled with the music of silver bells——"

"Stop!" gasped Barris, and rose trembling from his chair. He had grown ten years older.

"Roy," interposed Pierpont coolly, "what the deuce are you harrying Barris for?"

I looked at Barris and he looked at me. After a second or two he sat down again.

"Go on, Roy," he said.

"I must," I answered; "for now I am certain that I have not dreamed."

I told them everything; but, even as I told it, the whole thing seemed so vague, so unreal, that at times I stopped with the hot blood tingling in my ears, for it seemed impossible that sensible men, in the year of our Lord 1896, could seriously discuss such matters.

I feared Pierpont, but he did not even smile. As for Barris, he sat with his handsome head sunk on his breast, his unlighted pipe clasped tight in both hands.

When I had finished, Pierpont turned slowly and looked at Barris. Twice he moved his lips as if about to ask something, and then remained mute.

"Yian is a city," said Barris, speaking dreamily. "Was that what you wished to know, Pierpont?"

We nodded silently.

"Yian is a city," repeated Barris, "where the great river winds under the thousand bridges, where the gardens are sweet-scented and the air is filled with the music of silver bells."

"My lips formed the question, "Where is this city?"

"It lies," said Barris, almost querulously, "across the seven oceans and the river which is longer than from the earth to the moon."

"What do you mean?" said Pierpont.

"Ah," said Barris, rousing himself with an effort and raising his sunken eyes, "I am using the allegories of another land; let it pass. Have I not told you of the Kuen-Yuin? Yian is the centre of the Kuen-Yuin. It lies hidden in that gigantic shadow called China, vague and vast as the midnight heavens—a continent unknown, impenetrable."

"Impenetrable," repeated Pierpont below his breath.

"I have seen it," said Barris dreamily. "I have seen the dead plains of Black Cathay, and I have crossed the mountains of Death, whose summits are above the atmosphere. I have seen the shadow of Xangi cast across Abaddon. Better to die a million miles from Yezd and Ater Quedah than to have seen the white water lotus close in the shadow of Xangi! I have slept among the ruins of Xaindu where the winds never cease and the Wulwulleh is wailed by the dead."

"And Yian," I urged gently.

There was an unearthly look on his face as he turned slowly toward me.

"Yian—I have lived there—and loved there. When the breath of my body shall cease, when the dragon's claw shall fade from my arm"—he tore up his sleeve, and we saw a white crescent shining above his elbow—"when the light of my eyes has faded for ever, then, even then, I shall not forget the city of Yian. Why, it is my home—mine! The river and the thousand bridges, the white peak beyond, the sweet-scented gardens, the lilies, the pleasant noise of the summer wind laden with bee-music and the music of bells—all these are mine. Do you think because the Kuen-Yuin feared the dragon's claw on my arm that my work with them is ended? Do you think that because Yue-Laou could give, that I acknowledge his right to take away? Is he Xangi, in whose shadow the white water-lotus dares not raise its head? No, no!" he cried violently; "it was not from Yue-Laou, the sorcerer, the Maker of Moons, that my happiness came. It was real; it was not a shadow to vanish like a tinted bubble. Can a sorcerer create and give a man the woman he loves? Is Yue-Laou as great as Xangi then? Xangi is God. In His own time, in His infinite goodness and mercy, He will bring me again to the woman I love. And I know she waits for me at God's feet."

In the strained silence that followed, I could hear my heart's double beat, and I saw Pierpont's face blanched and pitiful. Barris shook himself and raised his head. The change in his ruddy face frightened me.

"Heed!" he said, with a terrible glance at me; "the print of the dragon's claw is on your forehead, and Yue-Laou knows it. If you must love, then love like a man, for you will suffer like a soul in hell in the end. What is her name again?"

"Ysonde," I answered simply.

VIII.

At nine o'clock that night we caught one of the Goldmakers. I do not know how Barris had laid his trap; all I saw of the affair can be told in a minute or two.

We were posted on the Cardinal road about a mile below the house, Pierpont and I with drawn revolvers on one side, under a butternut-tree, Barris on the other, a Winchester rifle across his knees.

I had just asked Pierpont the hour, and he was feeling for his watch, when far up the road we heard the sound of a galloping horse, nearer, nearer, clattering, thundering past. Then Barris's rifle spat flame, and the dark mass, horse and rider, crashed into the dust. Pierpont had the half-stunned horseman by the collar in a second—the horse was stone dead—and,

as we lighted a pine knot to examine the fellow, Barris's two riders galloped up and drew bridle beside us.

"Hm!" said Barris with a scowl, "it's the Shiner, or I'm a moonshiner."

We crowded curiously around to see the "Shiner." He was red-headed, fat, and filthy, and his little red eyes burned in his head like the eyes of an angry pig.

Barris went through his pockets methodically while Pierpont held him and I held the torch. The Shiner was a gold mine; pockets, shirt, bootlegs, hat, even his dirty fists, clutched tight and bleeding, were bursting with lumps of soft yellow gold. Barris dropped this "moonshine gold," as we had come to call it, into the pockets of his shooting-coat, and withdrew to question the prisoner. He came back again in a few minutes and motioned his mounted men to take the Shiner in charge. We watched them, rifle on thigh, walking their horses slowly away into the darkness, the Shiner, tightly bound, shuffling sullenly between them.

"Who is the Shiner?" asked Pierpont, slipping the revolver into his pocket again.

"A moonshiner, counterfeiter, forger, and highwayman," said Barris, "and probably a murderer. Drummond will be glad to see him, and I think it likely he will be persuaded to confess to him what he refuses to confess to me."

"Wouldn't he talk?" I asked.

"Not a syllable. Pierpont, there is nothing more for you to do."

"For me to do? Are you not coming back with us, Barris?"

"No," said Barris.

We walked along the dark road in silence for a while, I wondering what Barris intended to do, but he said nothing more until we reached our own verandah. Here he held out his hand, first to Pierpont, then to me, saying good-bye as though he were going on a long journey.

"How soon will you be back?" I called out to him as he turned away towards the gate. He came across the lawn again and again, took our hands with a quiet affection that I had never imagined him capable of.

"I am going," he said, "to put an end to his gold-making to-night. I know that you fellows have never suspected what I was about on my little solitary evening strolls after dinner. I will tell you. Already I have unobtrusively killed four of these gold-makers, my men put them underground just below the new wash-out at the four-mile stone. There are three left alive—the Shiner, whom we have; another criminal named 'Yellow' or 'Yaller' in the vernacular, and the third——"

"The third!" repeated Pierpont excitedly.

"The third I have never yet seen. But I know who and what he is—I know; and if he is of human flesh and blood, his blood will flow to-night."

As he spoke a slight noise across the turf attracted my attention. A mounted man was advancing silently in the starlight over the spongy meadowland. When he came nearer, Barris struck a match, and we saw that he bore a corpse across his saddle-bow.

"Yaller, Colonel Barris," said the man, touching his slouched hat in salute.

This grim introduction to the corpse made me shudder, and, after a moment's examination of the stiff, wide-eyed dead man, I drew back.

"Identified!" said Barris. "Take him to the four-mile post, and carry his effects to Washington—under seal, mind, Johnstone."

Away cantered the rider with his ghastly burden, and Barris took our hands once more for the last time. Then he went away gaily, with a jest on his lips, and Pierpont and I turned back into the house.

For an hour we sat moodily smoking in the hall before the fire, saying little until Pierpont burst out with: "I wish Barris had taken one of us with him to-night."

The same thought had been running in my mind, but I said: "Barris knows what he's about.'

This observation neither comforted us nor opened the lane to further conversation, and after a few minutes Pierpont said good-night and called for Howlett and hot water. When he had been warmly tucked away by Howlett, I turned out all but one lamp, sent the dogs away with David, and dismissed Howlett for the night.

I was not inclined to retire, for I knew I could not sleep. There was a book lying on the table beside the fire, and I opened it and read a page or two, but my mind was fixed on other things.

The window-shades were raised, and I looked out at the star-set firmament. There was no moon that night, but the sky was dusted all over with sparkling stars, and a pale radiance, brighter even than moonlight, fell over meadow and wood. Far away in the forest I heard the voice of the wind, and a soft warm wind that whispered a name—"Ysonde."

"Listen!" sighed the voice of the wind, and "Listen!" echoed the swaying trees with every little leaf a-quiver. I listened.

Where the long grasses trembled with the crickets' cadence I heard her name—"Ysonde." I heard it in the rustling woodbine where grey moths hovered; I heard it in the drip, drip, drip of the dew from the porch. The silent meadow brook whispered her name, the rippling woodland streams repeated it—"Ysonde, Ysonde"—until all earth and sky were filled with the soft thrill—"Ysonde, Ysonde, Ysonde."

A night-thrush sang in a thicket close by the porch, and I stole to the verandah to listen. After a while it began again a little further on. I ventured out into the road. Again I heard it far away in the forest, and I followed it, for I knew it was singing of Ysonde.

When I came to the path that leaves the main road and enters the Sweet Fern Covert below the spinney, I hesitated; but the beauty of the night lured me on and the night-thrushes called me from every thicket. In the starry radiance shrubs, grasses, field flowers, stood out distinctly, for there was no moon to cast shadows. Meadow and brook, grove and stream, were illuminated by the pale glow. Like great lamps lighted, the planets hung from the high domed sky, and through their mysterious rays the fixed stars, calm, serene, stared from the heavens like eyes.

I waded on waist-deep through fields of dewy golden-rod, through late clover and wild-oat wastes, through crimson-fruited sweetbriar, blueberry, and wild plum, until the low whisper of the Wier Brook warned me that the path had ended.

But I would not stop, for the night air was heavy with the perfume of water-lilies, and far away, across the low wooded cliffs and the wet meadowland beyond, there was a distant gleam of silver, and I heard the murmur of sleepy waterfowl. I would go to the lake. The way was clear except for the dense young growth and the snares of the moose-bush.

The night-thrushes had ceased, but I did not want for the company of living creatures. Slender, quick darting forms crossed my path at intervals, sleek mink, that fled like shadows at my step, wiry weasels and fat musk-rats, hurrying onward to some tryst or killing.

I never had seen so many little woodland creatures on the move at night. I began to wonder where they all were going so fast, why they all hurried on in the same direction. Now I passed a hare hopping through the brushwood, now a rabbit scurrying by, flag hoisted. As I entered the beech second-growth two foxes glided by me; a little further on a doe crashed out of the underbrush, and close behind her stole a lynx, eyes shining like coals.

He neither paid attention to the doe nor to me, but loped away towards the north.

The lynx was in flight.

"From what?" I asked myself, wondering. There was no forest fire, no cyclone, no flood.

If Barris had passed that way could he have stirred up this sudden exodus? Impossible; even a regiment in the forest could scarcely have put to rout these frightened creatures.

"What on earth," thought I, turning to watch the headlong flight of a fisher-cat, "what on earth has started the beasts out at this time of night?"

I looked up into the sky. The placid glow of the fixed stars comforted me, and I stepped on through the narrow spruce belt that leads down to the borders of the Lake of the Stars.

Wild cranberry and moose-bush entwined my feet, dewy branches spattered me with moisture, and the thick spruce needles scraped my face as I threaded my way over mossy logs and deep spongy tussocks down to the level gravel of the lake shore.

Although there was no wind, the little waves were hurrying in from the lake, and I heard them splashing among the pebbles. In the pale star-glow thousands of water-lilies lifted their half-closed chalices toward the sky.

I threw myself full length upon the shore, and, chin on hand, looked out across the lake.

Splash, splash came the waves along the shore, higher, nearer, until a film of water, thin and glittering as a knife-blade, crept up to my elbows. I could not understand it; the lake was rising, but there had been no rain. All along the shore the water was running up. I heard the waves along the sedge-grass; the weeds at my side were awash in the ripples. The lilies rocked on the tiny waves, every wet pad rising on the swells, sinking, rising again, until the whole lake was glimmering with undulating blossoms. How sweet and deep was the fragrance from the lilies! And now the water was ebbing slowly, and the waves receded, shrinking from the shore-rim until the

white pebbles appeared again, shining like froth on a brimming glass.

No animal swimming out in the darkness along the shore, no heavy salmon surging could have set the whole shore aflood as though the wash from a great boat were rolling in. Could it have been the overflow, through the Wier Brook, of some cloud-burst far back in the forest? This was the only way I could account for it, and yet, when I had crossed the Wier Brook, I had not noticed that it was swollen.

And as I lay there thinking, a faint breeze sprang up and I saw the surface of the lake whiten with lifted lily pads.

All around me the alders were sighing; I heard the forest behind me stir; the crossed branches rubbing softly, bark against bark. Something—it may have been an owl—sailed out of the night, dipped, soared, and was again engulfed, and far across the water I heard its faint cry—"Ysonde."

Then first, for my heart was full, I cast myself down upon my face, calling on her name. My eyes were wet when I raised my head—for the spray from the shore was drifting in again—and my heart beat heavily "No more, no more." But my heart lied, for even as I raised my face to the calm stars, I saw her standing still, close beside me; and very gently I spoke her name, "Ysonde." She held out both hands.

"I was lonely," she said, "and I went to the glade, but the forest is full of frightened creatures and they frightened me. Has anything happened in the woods? The deer are running toward the heights."

Her hand still lay in mine as we moved along the shore, and the lapping of the water on rock and shallow was no lower than our voices.

"Why did you leave me without a word, there at the fountain in the glade?" she said.

"I leave you——"

"Indeed you did, running swiftly with your dog, plunging through thickets and brush—oh, you frightened me!"

"Did I leave you so?"

"Yes—after——"

"After?"

"You had kissed me——"

Then we leaned down together and looked into the black water set with stars, just as we had bent together over the fountain in the glade.

"Do you remember?" I asked.

"Yes. See, the water is inlaid with silver stars, everywhere white lilies floating and the stars below, deep, deep down."

"What is the flower you hold in your hand?"

"White water-lotus."

"Tell me about Yue-Laou, Dzil-Nbu of the Kuen-Yuin," I whispered, lifting her head so that I could see her eyes.

"Would it please you to hear?"

"Yes, Ysonde."

"All that I know is yours, as I am yours, all that I am. Bend closer. Is it of Yue-Laou you would know? Yue-Laou is Dzil-Nbu of Kuen-Yuin. He lived in the Moon. He is old—very, very old; and once, before he came to rule the Kuen-Yuin, he was the old man who unites with a silken cord all predestined couples, after which nothing can prevent their union. But all that is changed since he came to rule the Kuen-Yuin. Now he has perverted the Xin—the good genii of China — and has fashioned from their warped bodies a monster which he calls the Xin. This monster is horrible, for it not only lives in its own body, but it has thousands of loathsome satellites—living creatures without mouths, blind, that move when the Xin moves, like a mandarin and his escort. They are part of the Xin, although they are not attached. Yet if one of these satellites is injured, the Xin writhes with agony. It is fearful—this huge living bulk and these creatures spread out like severed fingers that wriggle around a hideous hand."

"Who told you this?"

"My step-father."

"Do you believe it?"

"Yes. I have seen one of the Xin's creatures."

"Where, Ysonde?"

"Here in these woods."

"Then you believe there is a Xin here?"

"There must be—perhaps in the lake."

"Oh! Xins inhabit lakes?"

"Yes, and the seven seas. I am not afraid here."

"Why?"

"Because I wear the symbol of the Kuen-Yuin."

"Then I am not safe," I smiled.

"Yes, you are, for I hold you in my arms. Shall I tell you more about the Xin? When the Xin is about to do to death a man the Yeth-hounds gallop through the night——"

"What are the Yeth-hounds, Ysonde?"

"The Yeth-hounds are dogs without heads. They are the spirits of murdered

I STUMBLED TO MY KNEES; BUT SOMETHING HELD ME—SOMETHING WHICH BOUND ME LIKE A WEB IN A THOUSAND STRONG SILKY MESHES.

children which pass through the woods at night, making a wailing noise."

"Do you believe this?"

"Yes, for I have worn the yellow lotus——"

"The yellow lotus——"

"Yellow is the symbol of faith——"

"Where?"

"In Yian," she said faintly.

After a while I said—

"Ysonde, you know there is a God?"

"God and Xangi are one."

"Have you ever heard of Christ?"

"No," she answered softly.

The wind began again among the tree-tops. I felt her hands closing in mine.

"Ysonde," I asked again, "do you believe in sorcerers?"

"Yes, the Kuen-Yuin are sorcerers; Yue-Laou is a sorcerer."

"Have you seen sorcery?"

"Yes, the reptile satellite of the Xin——"

"Anything else?"

"My charm—the golden ball, the symbol of the Kuen-Yuin. Have you seen it change? Have you seen the reptiles writhe——?"

"Yes," said I shortly, and then remained silent, for a sudden shiver of apprehension had seized me. Barris also had spoken gravely, ominously, of the sorcerers, the Kuen-Yuin, and I had seen with my own eyes the graven reptiles turning and twisting on the glowing globe.

"Still," said I, aloud, "God lives, and sorcery is but a name."

"Ah," murmured Ysonde, drawing closer to me, "they say, in Yian, 'the Kuen-Yuin live; God is but a name.'"

"They lie," I whispered fiercely.

"Be careful," she pleaded, "they may hear you. Remember that you have the mark of the dragon's claw on your brow."

"What of it?" I asked, thinking also of the white mark on Barris's arm.

"Ah, don't you know that those who are marked with the dragon's claw are followed by Yue-Laou, for good or for evil, and the evil means death if you offend him?"

"Do you believe that?" I asked impatiently.

"I know it," she sighed.

"Who told you all this? Your step-father? What in Heaven's name is he then—a Chinaman?"

"I don't know; he is not like you."

"Have—have you told him anything about me?"

"He knows about you—no, I have told him nothing—ah, what is this?—see—it is a cord, a cord of silk about your neck—and about mine!"

"Where did that come from?" I asked, astonished.

"It must be—it must be Yue-Laou who binds me to you—it is as my step-father said—he said Yue-Laou would bind us——"

"Nonsense!" I said almost roughly, and seized the silken cord; but to my amazement it melted in my hand like smoke.

"What is all this damnable jugglery?" I whispered angrily; but my anger vanished as the words were spoken, and a convulsive shudder shook me to the feet. Standing on the shore of the lake, a stone's-throw away, was a figure, twisted and bent—a little old man, blowing sparks from a live coal which he held in his naked hand. The coal glowed with increasing radiance, lighting up the skull-like face above it, and threw a red glow over the sands at his feet. But the face!—the ghastly Chinese face on which the light flickered—and the snaky slitted eyes, sparkling as the coal glowed hotter. Coal! It was not a coal, but a golden globe staining the night with crimson flames: it was the symbol of the Kuen-Yuin.

"See! See!" gasped Ysonde, trembling violently. "See the moon rising from between his fingers! Oh, I thought it was my step-father, and it is Yue-Laou, the Maker of Moons—no! no! it is my step-father—ah, God! they are the same!"

Frozen with terror, I stumbled to my knees, groping for my revolver which bulged in my coat pocket; but something held me—something which bound me like a web in a thousand strong, silky meshes. I struggled and turned, but the web grew tighter; it was over us—all around us, drawing, pressing us into each other's arms until we lay side by side, bound hand and body and foot, palpitating, panting like a pair of netted pigeons.

And the creature on the shore below! What was my horror to see a moon, huge, silvery, rise like a bubble from between his fingers, mount higher, higher into the still air and hang aloft in the midnight sky, while another moon rose from his fingers, and another and yet another, until the vast span of heaven was set with moons and the earth sparkled like a diamond in the white glare.

A great wind began to blow from the east, and it bore to our ears a long, mournful howl—a cry so unearthly that for a moment our hearts stopped.

"The Yeth-hounds!" sobbed Ysonde. "Do you hear! they are passing through the forest! The Xin is near!"

Then all around us in the dry sedge grasses came a rustle as if some small animals were creeping, and a damp acrid odour filled the air. I knew the smell, I saw the spidery, crab-like creatures swarm out around me and drag their soft, yellow, hairy bodies across the shrinking grasses. They passed, hundreds of them, poisoning the air, tumbling, writhing, crawling with their blind, mouthless heads raised. Birds, half asleep and confused by the darkness, fluttered away before them in helpless fright, rabbits sprung from their forms, weasels glided away like flying shadows. What remained of the forest creatures rose and fled from the loathsome invasion; I heard the squeak of a terrified hare, the snort of stampeding deer, and the lumbering gallop of a bear; and all the time I was choking, half suffocated by the poisoned air.

Then, as I struggled to free myself from the silken snare about me, I cast a glance of deadly fear at the sorcerer below, and at the same moment I saw him turn in his tracks.

"Halt!" cried a voice from the bushes.

"Barris!" I shouted, half leaping up in my agony.

I saw the sorcerer spring forward, I heard the bang! bang! bang! of a revolver, and, as the sorcerer fell on the water's edge, I saw Barris jump out into the white glare and fire again, once, twice, three times, into the writhing figure at his feet.

Then an awful thing occurred. Up out of the black lake reared a shadow, a nameless, shapeless mass, headless, sightless, gigantic, gaping from end to end.

A great wave struck Barris and he fell, another washed him up on the pebbles, another whirled him back into the water, and then—and then the thing fell over him—and I fainted.

* * * *

This, then, is all that I know concerning Yue-Laou and the Xin. I do not fear the ridicule of scientists or of the Press, for I have told the truth. Barris is gone, and the thing that killed him is alive to-day in the Lake of the Stars, while the spider-like satellites roam through the Cardinal Woods. The game has fled, the forests around the lake are empty of any living creatures save the reptiles that creep when the Xin moves in the depths of the lake.

General Drummond knows what he has lost in Barris, and we, Pierpont and I, know what we have lost also. His will we found in the drawer, the key of which he had handed me. It was wrapped in a bit of paper on which was written—

Yue-Laou, the sorcerer, is here in the Cardinal Woods. I must kill him, or he will kill me. He made and gave me to the woman I loved. He made her—I saw him—he made her out of a white water-lotus bud. When our child was born he came again before me, and demanded from me the woman I loved. Then, when I refused, he went away, and that night my wife and child vanished from my side, and I found upon her pillow a white lotus bud. Roy, the woman of your dream, Ysonde, may be my child. God help you if you love her, for Yue-Laou will give and take away, as though he were Xangi, which is God. I will kill Yue-Laou before I leave this forest, or he will kill me. FRANKLYN BARRIS.

Now the world knows what Barris thought of the Kuen-Yuin and of Yue-Laou. I see that the newspapers are just becoming excited over the glimpses that Li-Hung-Chang has afforded them of Black Cathay and the demons of the Kuen-Yuin. The Kuen-Yuin are on the move.

Pierpont and I have dismantled the shooting-box in the Cardinal Woods. We hold ourselves ready at a moment's notice to join and lead the first Government party to drag the Lake of the Stars and cleanse the forest of the crab reptiles. But it will be necessary that a large force assembles, and a well-armed force, for we never have found the body of Yue-Laou, and, living or dead, I fear him. Is he living?

Pierpont, who found Ysonde and myself lying unconscious on the lake-shore the morning after, saw no trace of corpse or blood on the sands. He may have fallen into the lake, but I fear and Ysonde fears that he is alive. We never were able to find either her dwelling-place or the glade and the fountain again. The only thing that remains to her of her former life is the gold serpent in the Metropolitan Museum and her golden globe, the symbol of the Kuen-Yuin; but the latter no longer changes colour.

David and the dogs are waiting for me in the courtyard as I write. Pierpont is in the gun-room loading shells, and Howlett brings him mug after mug of my ale from the wood. Ysonde bends over my desk—I feel her hand on my arm, and she is saying: "Don't you think you have done enough to-day, dear? How can you write such silly nonsense, without a shadow of truth or foundation?"

Lady Greensleeves

Alas my love, you do me wrong
To cast me off discourteously:
And I have lovèd you so long,
Delighting in your company.

Greensleeves was all my joy,
Greensleeves was my delight:
Greensleeves was my Heart of Gold,
And who but Lady Greensleeves.

I have been ready at your hand
To grant whatever you would crave;
I have both waged life and land
Your love and good-will for to have.

Thou couldst desire no earthly thing
But still thou hadst it readily.
Thy music still to play and sing:
And yet thou wouldst not love me.

My men were clothèd all in green,
And they did ever wait on thee;
All thing was gallant to be seen.
And yet thou wouldst not love me.
They set thee up, they took thee down,
They served thee with humility;
Thy foot might not once touch the ground.
And yet thou wouldst not love me.
Greensleeves now farewell! adieu!
God I pray to prosper thee!
For I am still thy lover true:
Come once again and love me

There is a lady sweet and kind,
Was never face so pleased my mind;
I did but see her passing by,
And yet I love her till I die.

HOW THE OTHER HALF LIVES.

THE ENGINE-DRIVER.

By WILFRED WEMLEY.

THE time was winter; the scene, the great locomotive shed of a leading railway in London. There, under the kindly direction of one of the chiefs, I was spending a pleasant hour examining the superb bogie-engines which the company has added recently to its stock. As we passed from shed to shed over a ramification of points and crossings, it dawned upon me suddenly that we were followed. A short, good-humoured, burly man was dogging our steps—I was going to say like a cat—and wheresoever we went, to that place the "shadow" carried himself. At last, and after a display of continuing obstinacy, the burly man waylaid us in one of the repairing-shops, and attempted to tell us his grievance. Such a catalogue of woes I have never listened to.

"Thirty-five years," he began, "thirty-five years as man and boy 'ave I served this company. Mornin', noon, and night, Sir, as I call you to witness, I 'ave done my dooty like a faithful servant. And what's the end of it; what do I get for my pains—why, read it for yourself?"

He held out a scrawl of paper with the words, but my companion, speaking in a kindly way to him, sought to postpone the statement of his grievance—

"By and by," said he, "you may tell me all about it, when I am less busy."

But the burly man was not to be put off with a courteous wave of the hand.

"Thirty-five years," he repeated, "thirty-five years as man and boy——"

At this point we quitted the shed hurriedly, and having crossed more points and passed by the great coaling stations, we took refuge at last in the office, but, lo! there was the burly man with his "thirty-five years."

"Well," cried my guide, exasperated beyond endurance, "what do you mean by following us like this—what is the matter?"

The encouragement was as new wine to the shadow. Bracing himself up like a Red Indian about to harangue his fellows, he delivered the oration—

"Why, Sir, it's this. I was down under my engine in the yard there, and my new mate; he don't know nothink about the smoke rules, and he shut the furnace door. She wasn't showing a capful then, but they fined me. Half-a-crown I've paid, and I want to know if that's justice. Thirty-five years, and I never showed smoke afore. And now it ends like this."

It was pathetic to hear that his grievance amounted to the ridiculously small sum of thirty pence, but the chief was unflinching.

"You know the rule," he said; "if your fireman was raw, it was your duty to teach him."

The driver went away, and I asked my companion to explain the mystery to me.

"It's just this," said he; "if our engines make much smoke when they are standing in the open here, we have complaints from the police and the neighbours. It is perfectly possible to prevent such a nuisance, for a man has only to turn on his steam-blast and to open his furnace-door. If he will not do so simple a thing we fine him. We are bound to do that in self-protection."

"Are there many fines for engine-drivers?" I asked.

"A necessary minimum only. Some lines fine a man who is late in the yard or late with his engine out of it. Some fine him for skidding the wheels of his train with the brake, or for smoking on duty. The latter point is a case of pure discipline. Given a dark, cold night, and an express travelling sixty miles an hour, and inspectors may be a little blind. But we could not have drivers smoking about our stations for obvious reasons."

"Are there no rewards to set against these fines?"

"Certainly. There are cases where a man can earn money by saving coal consistently. Each class of engine is allowed so much coal per mile. This amount

varies with different lines from twenty-eight to thirty-six pounds. Heavy goods engines require the larger allowance—slow passenger engines the smaller. An account is kept of the coal delivered to each man, and if he saves on his allowance, he may earn promotion at the end of the year. You must remember, too, that this work is very well paid. Drivers earn from forty-two shillings to sixty-three shillings a week. Few of our men work more than ten hours a day, and there are all sorts of clubs for their benefit. Of course, they are skilled in every sense of the word, and they have spent many years in our service before they are given such responsible positions. Very few drivers, even of goods trains, are less than thirty years old. Most of our express men are over fifty. They begin by going into the sheds when mere lads, and there they learn all about an engine and how to clean it. Four or five years of cleaners' work promotes them to the footplate of a

RAKING OUT IN THE YARD.

goods engine as firemen. The next step is to the footplate of a slow passenger engine; after that, they become firemen to an express. It is now time to make drivers of them, and they go back, as it were, to the bottom of the ladder, beginning by driving a goods engine, then getting promoted to a slow passenger, and finally, when they are ripe with long experience, to the commanding position—driver of an express. Taken as a whole, a finer, more sober, steadier body of men does not exist. And I think you can say that for the drivers of every company in the country."

This was high praise; but I think that few who know anything of an engine-driver's life will withhold it. Speaking for myself, I have seen much of such workers, and I know none deserving a higher tribute for all those qualities which go to make a man. It is not enough to talk to an engine-driver to understand him and his life; you must ride on his engine with him, watch him at his work, observe some of the dangers and difficulties he has to face. Nowadays this permission is very difficult to obtain; a few years ago it was not so difficult. I remember well coming up on the Dutchman from Bristol to London not so very long ago, and getting a lesson in the noble art of engine-driving which no words could convey. That was on one of the old "broad-gaugers," a magnificent locomotive, with eight-feet drivers, and a capacity for the consumption of coal which would have moved a Quaker who owned a colliery to quadrilles. So far as my memory goes, I betrayed a spasmodic affection for the larger pieces of this coal at all the critical points of the journey. It proved a material aid to courage not to be despised. It is astonishing how brave a man can be when he is sitting on the floor of a locomotive, with his arms round a hunk of the "best Welsh," and his only conversation is the repeated inquiry, "Don't we slow up here?"

Distinctly my first impression of engine-driving was this, that a man must have nerves of iron to succeed in it. The mere passenger complains in his irritable moods if his carriage swing and sway ever so slightly. On an engine you feel that every jolt is about to send the whole thing to perdition. A trivial inequality of the line starts those seventy or eighty tons of metal oscillating, and the great machine rolls and rattles indescribably. Every beat of the piston sends a quiver through the footplate. You feel it all over your body—a troubling pulsation which searches every fibre. The perception for speed is then quickened enormously. If you put your head round the guardplate ever so little, the wind straightens your hair and sweeps upon your face with the power of a hurricane. While the difficulties of standing upright upon the footplate have been greatly exaggerated by fanciful scribes, none the less is it true that the amateur finds it by no means easy to preserve his balance there when he is crashing over points. The heat from the furnace scorches his legs; if it were not for the buckets of water which the fireman dashes on the plate, the soles of the feet would be actually burnt. The sense of force is ever present. It is impossible when the great locomotive is careering madly through a station, and doing sixty-one or sixty-two miles an hour easily, to avoid the reflection—what if she missed the points! Did you speak to the driver, he would answer you gruffly with the assurance that there would be "widders and orphans." It is all nothing to him. He stands on the right-hand side of the footplate like a statue. His eye is now upon the signals ahead, now upon the steam-gauges, now upon the water-glass, now glancing into the furnace when the fireman coals. And it is astonishing to note the amount of coal an engine will burn. Uphill, a fireman's shovel is hardly at rest. Mass after mass of the finely broken "Welsh" is thrown into the bowels of the white-hot mass. The steam-gauge is ever crying, "More coal!" The pace at which a great engine runs nowadays, the high pressure she works at, add to the necessity. Yet so skilfully is she built that a modern "flyer" will burn little more than one of Brunel's, and yet pull almost twice the weight.

All this, however, is the pure business of the engine-driver's life. The question, "How he lives?" is best to be answered by himself. When I was asked to write this article I went off to Paddington and trapped a jovial-looking, rubicund-jowled driver who was just about to take the great afternoon Western express. The man was in possession of one of the new bogie engines with "seven-feet-eight-and-a-half-inch" drivers—the picture of an engine, its brass shining like gold, the whole shape of it surpassingly elegant, and in itself a tribute to the admirable work done at Swindon. Indeed, for sheer elegance and beauty of design there are no engines in the world to surpass those of the Great Western; and the way they

are kept at Paddington does infinite credit to Mr. Armstrong and to all who work under him.

"Well," said I to the driver, "how do you like the new engines?"

He stopped oiling the cylinder, and jerking his thumb backward in the direction of the train, remarked—

"How am I to like them when he's give me eight so-and-so bogie coaches. How am I going to keep time with them?"

This problem was far beyond my ken, so I tried again.

"Heavy load, eh? Don't you want a second engine?"

"Why, what else should I want; but that's his artfulness; he won't give me one, d'ye see, because he'll run a second on the three-fifteen. Look at the road, too; all grease and wet. How am I going to keep time on that?"

His language at this point was not exactly fit for publication; and he continued to oil the cylinders vigorously. My next question was put quite timidly.

"You find the grease troubles you, do you say?"

"That's the word, Sir, as you'd know yourself if you was on the footplate there. Get two or three extra coaches on one of these single-wheel engines, and they're nowhere. The big wheel can't abide grease. It's nothing but slip, slip, slip, all the way to Bristol. You want a coupled engine when the road's bad."

"Is Bristol your daily run?"

"It is so: Bristol and back, which is two hundred and thirty-seven miles, Sir. Put it down roughly, we're travelling just about five hours and three-quarters?"

"And how long are you on your engine every day?"

He scratched his head with the top of his oil-can before he answered.

"Well, that depends on your turn. Suppose I come on to drive the ten-fifteen out of Paddington in the morning, I've got to be on my engine one hour at least before I start. I'm generally on an hour and a quarter, but that's my look-out. If I take that train, I'll have, maybe, pretty well three hours to get my dinner and oil-up at Bristol; and I'll be back in the yard at Westbourne Park about half-past six. But my day is not done then by a long way. Before I can sign off I must take the old girl into the yard to the coal-shed, and see that she is coaled and watered ready for the next day. More than that, I must write up my report of the day's run and overhaul my engine from buffer to buffer, making a note of any little repair that may want doing. Generally speaking, Sir, this company does not work us more than ten hours a day; though, of course, if a man's on a goods engine and is blocked on the road, he may be on his footplate for fifteen hours together. If that's the case, and he is locked up in a country siding after fifteen hours' work, he has the right to leave his train and run back to the nearest engine-shed for twelve hours' rest. We don't get much of that sort of thing since we've had four roads; and, all round, those four roads are a godsend. It lets we on the expresses drive with fewer checks, and it gives goods' drivers a fair chance to do their journey. Why, bless ye, in the old time there was often a block of trains between here and Didcot which would have drove a weak-headed man into a lunatic asylum. But they all had to be dealt with, Sir, and dealt with sharp."

"Speaking from your own experience," said I, "would you sooner drive a fast train or a slow?"

"Well, I suppose I'd sooner drive a fast one or I wouldn't be on the footplate of this express. My fancy isn't for 'Pickford's' I can tell you. Some, maybe, haven't got the nerve to drive a through train. It's how you was born, after all; and as for myself, I ain't got no nerves that I know on. Anyway, I've druv on this line for more than thirty year, and I'm as hale a man as you'll find between here and Salisbury."

Why he should have chosen Salisbury I do not know, but ignoring the claim, I went back to a point which has always interested me.

"Do engine-drivers suffer from any particular ailment?" I asked.

"Well, you've got to ask 'em to find that out, I expect. If a man's born to have the rickets I don't suppose as drivin' an engine will cure him. For the matter of that, Sir, some of my mates do suffer a bit in their legs. Standing so long before a hot fire gives 'em rheumatism. Taken altogether, though, they're as healthy a lot as you'll see—and as contented."

"Is the actual work very hard while you're at it?"

"It ain't so much the work—it's the head that's wanted. A good driver must have his eyes on three things at once, Sir.

He must look forward, so to speak, and yet keep his eyes on the gauges and the furnace. It don't do for him to think as he's a mucky shepherd playin' at chuck halfpenny under a tree. There's hundreds of lives depending on his eyes, and he isn't to forget it either. You can't stop an engine going sixty miles an hour like you can stop a cab. She wants something to hold her, she does. That's where the strain comes in. A man must never think of anything but his train until he's pulled up at Paddington."

"Can one man get more out of a locomotive than another?"

"Can a man get—why, Sir, can he run faster? Of course he can. There's as much difference between drivers as between carpenters. One man will give you sixty miles an hour with his gauge low; another won't drive fifty-five, and will be scooping up the coal all the time. An engine wants coaxing. She's just like a woman. You've got to know her, and to study her fancies."

"I can understand that, and I suppose that there is a wrong notion altogether about railway speed. This train you are driving now—what pace does she go?"

"That depends what part of the road you are on and how many coaches you have behind you. To-day, now, with this load I've got, I won't do fifty miles an hour until I'm through Ealing, which is six miles from here. Maybe I sha'n't touch sixty until I'm on the bank to Sonning, and then I'll barely reach it. We're timed through at fifty-three and a half miles an hour so far as Swindon, but I'll be late to-day with this grease on the road. An engine don't go fast all at once, Sir. With anything like a heavy train on, I can't get the old girl steaming free until I've done six or eight miles. The first mile takes her pretty well three minutes. Through Acton, which is four miles off, she may be doing forty miles an hour; but, as I say, it all depends upon the road."

"I JUST TURNED OFF STEAM AND LET HER SLOW DOWN BY HERSELF."

"Have you ever been in an accident?"

"No, thank God, that's not been in my way yet. I once had a narrow shave

near Reading, Sir. I was driving the morning Plymouth express, and the axle of my driving wheels broke in the Sonning Cutting, when I was doing over sixty miles an hour. That gave me a fright, I know. If I'd a-lost my head then and put the break on sudden, we'd a-took tickets for the blue junction, and no mistake."

"But you didn't," said I.

"No," said he; "I just turned off steam and let her slow down by herself, though my heart was in my mouth all the time. I thought every minute the axle would split and send us all to blazes. But it held until the train slowed, and then I stopped her with the brake. A little of that sort of thing is wuss than football, Sir."

I could not express my agreement with his conclusions, for at that moment the guard waved his flag and the great express steamed slowly out of the station.

A SKETCH.

A DAIRYMAID READING A LOVE-LETTER.

'Mid waiting pail and pan
Doth Bridget, smiling, scan
With eager eye the written word of love;
While low the humming bee
Doth murmur drowsily,
And loud the lark makes melody above.

Her bodice drapery
Doth, heaving, half betray
The struggling love that clamours speedy birth;
Enthronèd on her brow
A modest wonder now
Belies the red lips' half concealèd mirth.

The cattle low without,
The rustic yokèd lout
Doth, idle, rest his pails and wait her will;
But Bridget, standing there,
The sunlight on her hair,
Unheeding ponders and peruses still.

AGNES GROZIER HERBERTSON.

ON THE HILL-SIDE.

By NORA HOPPER.

The bairnie grat:
Their mither aneath the mools heard that.

"WHAT are you doing, Else?"

"Only telling the time, Rupert. See!"

Little Gräfin Else von Dordenau blew a puff of silken threads from the head of a tall milk-thistle that grew on a level with her blue eyes, and laughed merrily. "Don't you wonder how I knew it was there, 'Ert? I felt it tickle my cheek, and so—— Oh, I am not foolish if I *am* blind. 'Ert, how dumb you are! What are you doing?" She scrambled across the rough stones of their chosen hill-nook, and nestled down by her brother's side, lifting questioning fingers to feel his face. "What is it, 'Ert? Are you thinking about Mammachen? Not the new one, but the old mamma, I mean."

Graf Rupert turned his face away a little, as if he were afraid of his sister's blind blue eyes, and plucked with restless fingers at a tall plant of honesty which had grown up in the midst of a tangle of rock-plants, yellow alyssum, smelling of the sea, saxifrages, honey-coloured rock-roses, and summer snow-flakes.

"No—that is, yes, Else. I was thinking of Mammachen. You are growing very like her, little one; and she would have loved you so much, Else." There were tears in sixteen-year-old Rupert's dark eyes now, but little Else's face was unclouded still. "If I am like her, is that why our father kisses me so hard, 'Ert? and why our new Mammachen does not like me much? Nurse Magda says she did not like our old mamma at all."

"Magda is a very silly woman, and I'm sure the Gräfin is always very kind to you, Else."

"Yes," said Else, unconscious of the reproof, "of course. Make me a picture, 'Ert!" lifting her fingers to her brother's face again; "tell me what the clouds are doing."

"They mean rain, Else, for they are coming up quite black from the west, and I hear the bells ringing from the Kirche down in the valley — and *they* mean rain too. And far away——"

"Yes," said Else breathlessly, as they crouched down under a friendly rock to avoid the first splash of the coming rain. "What else? Oh, 'Ert!" as the thunder pealed round them. "What a noise! It frightens me. I wish my old mamma was here with me."

"I'll take care of you, little Else," Rupert said tenderly as the golden head burrowed into his arm. "And the noise isn't for you—it's only the Wild Riders."

"Tell about them," Else whispered. "Are they up above us, 'Ert—in the sky?"

SUMMER SNOW-FLAKES.

LOOKING FOR HONEY.

"Yes," her brother said, staring up into the blazing sky, as if he half believed his own words. "Hundreds of them, with long lances, crashing against each other; but they never come to fight among the rocks, Else; so don't be afraid, dear. Your mother," superstitiously, "would never let anything come near to hurt her baby."

"Mammachen's name was Else too," the younger Else whispered dreamily. "Tell more, 'Ert. Did Mammachen ever see the Wild Riders? Did they come for Mammachen—when—she—died? Magda said they did. Will they come for me, 'Ert? Oh, 'Ert, don't let them!" as the lapsing thunderstorm began again.

"They never came for Mammachen," Rupert cried out almost angrily. "The sky was quite clear, and the moon was up when Mammachen went away. She had you in her arms, Else, but she didn't know me, and she was lifting herself up to look out of her window—you know, the new Gräfin has that room now, and it looks out on that ugly sandy plain where nothing but dwarf elder-bushes grow—and Mammachen said she saw out there trees full of fruit, and running water, and a great palace beyond, with shining windows and pillared gateways. And then Magda took you from her, and Mammachen went away without saying good-bye to any of us. Magda's old, and she forgets; but if anyone came to fetch Mammachen, it was a little angel and not a Wild Rider."

"Oh!" Else sighed contentedly. "Then the Wild Riders won't come for *me* either. Oh, 'Ert! what's that?" Is the hill breaking in two? The rush and roar sounded like it; but instead of holding her closer through the hurtle of falling stones, bewildered Else felt her brother thrust her roughly aside; and when the dust and noise had ceased, she found herself alone in her darkness, crying helplessly upon an 'Ert who would not answer. Then the fashion of her cry changed to a plaintive call of "Mammachen, Mammachen, where are you? 'Ert's gone away and left me all alone. Little mamma, little mamma, won't you come to Else?"

"Else? Oh, my darling, Mammachen has come!" somebody said, gathering the frightened child into a pair of tender arms. "Were you so frightened, my poor blind baby, all alone in the dark? Never mind now: Mammachen has come."

"Oh, Mammachen!" sobbed Else, clinging closer, "the hill broke in two, and 'Ert pushed me away."

"'Ert was afraid lest the stones should hurt you, baby Else, as they have hurt

A TALL PLANT OF HONESTY.

him. Father would have been sorry to have his baby bruised as 'Ert is now. No, little heart, you must not go to

'Ert now; he does not want you. Come, sweet!"

She put a loving arm round Else's shoulders, heaving still with the memory of her past fit of sobbing, and drew her softly down the difficult path, lifting her here and there over perilously weather-worn places, and turning the little feet away from patches of delusively smooth grass.

"Are you tired, my baby?" she whispered, as Else stumbled once or twice. "Mother will carry you, sweet, and sing to you to shorten the way." The song was so low that it drifted past Else's ears like a breath of wind, so sweet that it made her drowsy, and as unending as the noise the wild bees make when they are looking in the stitchworts and satin-flowers for honey. It was not at an end

THE WILD RIDERS.

THE WHITE PALACES.

when Else felt herself set gently on her feet, and found her hands guided to a familiar object—the lion's head that served for bell-pull at the west gate of Schloss Dordenau.

"Ring, Else, and tell your father 'Ert is lying hurt on the Ettin Hill. Ring loud, my sweet, and now Mammachen must go back to 'Ert."

More quickly than feet ever went before hers flashed through dusty grasses up the hillside to the place where Rupert lay, half-buried in the stones which had crashed down upon him, a minute after he had flung Else aside out of harm's way, and even more tenderly than she had taken Else she lifted her boy's fallen head and held it on her bosom.

"Mammachen," the boy said, lifting bewildered eyes to her smiling face. "Mammachen, is it you really? or am I asleep? Oh, but Else—where is she?"

"She is home," his mother whispered tenderly. "Your father will be here soon, to look for *you*, my darling. Will you wait for him, Rupert, or will you come with *me*?"

"Mammachen," the boy said, setting his teeth to keep back a groan, "I have not been good enough—since you——"

"Since I saw the White Palaces and went away?"

"Then you were there, Mammachen, all the time?"

"I have always been with my children—

always. Yes, even when my boy thought he had forgotten me."

"Mammachen, then you knew——" Rupert said with a little gasp, as he covered his face with his bruised hands, trying to shut himself away from his mother's eyes. "Don't look at me—I can't bear it. Don't touch me, either—I'm not fit, Mammachen."

"Do you hear that noise of dogs barking?" his mother said, bending lower over him. "Your father is coming with Hund and Sap and the huntsman to look for you. Will you wait for him, my son, or come away with me"—her voice broke between tears and laughter—"to the White Palaces? There is no hunting or fishing there, my forester; nor is it all harp-playing for us, but we find much sad work to do, and much beautiful work. And if you stay here, Rupert, you will not hunt or fish or ride any more: you will be more helpless than Else; and you will never run or walk with her again. But if you come with me to the White Palaces, dear heart, you will be just as strong, and far lighter-hearted than you were yesterday. Which shall it be?"

"Mammachen, there's Else. I've been her eyes so long."

"Dear heart, then you will stay and keep your broken life for Else's sake."

"Mammachen, I must!" the boy cried, with a sob. Then arms less tender than his mother's closed round him, and he was lifted out from the stones that pinned him down; and as his tense limbs relaxed in the freedom that was agony, the boy cried out on his mother, half resolved to alter his choice. But she did not hear, for she was back again in the safe shelter of the White Palaces; and when Else was clinging round his bruised body, welcoming him back with tears and kisses, Rupert was not sorry that he had chosen difficult life instead of easy death. It was worth while being eyes to blind Else.

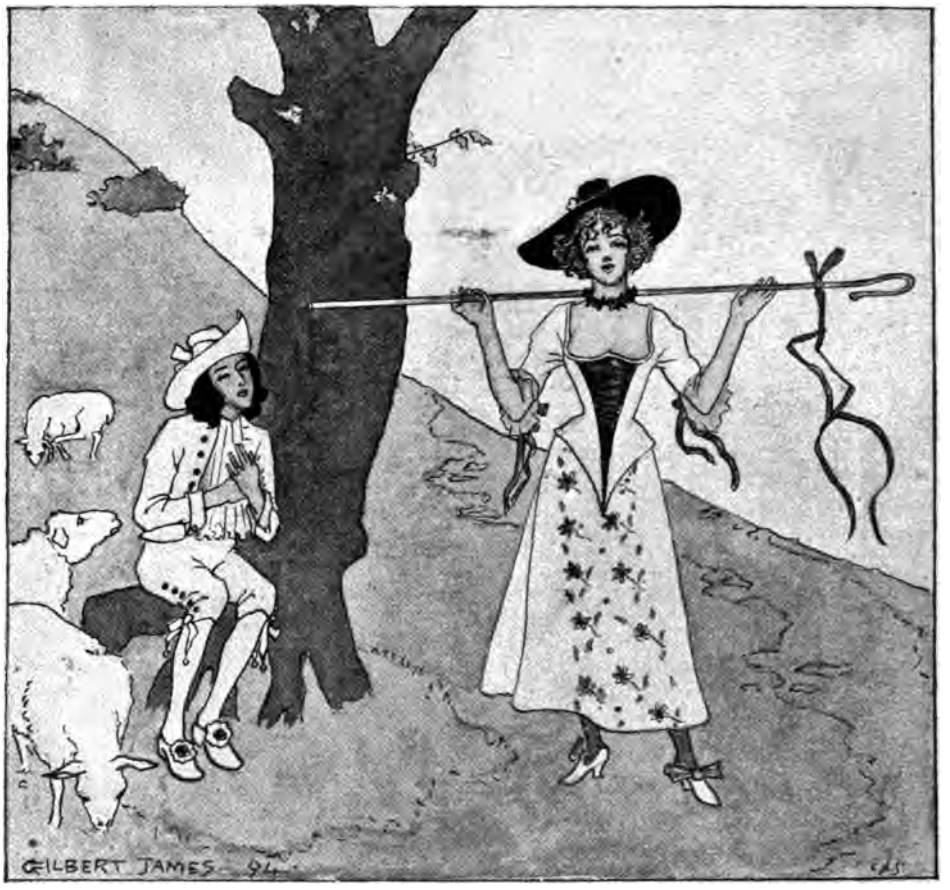
SONG OF SLEEP: TO SUNALINI.

From groves of spice,
O'er fields of rice,
Athwart the lotus stream,
I bring for you,
Aglint with dew,
A little, lovely dream.

Sweet, shut your eyes,
The wild fire-flies
Dance thro' the fairy *neem*.
From the poppy bole
For you I stole
A little, lovely dream.

Dear eyes, good-night,
In golden light
The stars around you gleam;
On you I press,
With soft caress,
A little, lovely dream.

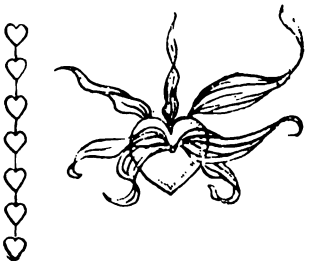
SAROJINI CHATTOPADHYAY



BY JOHN WILMOT,
EARL OF ROCHESTER.

CONSTANCY.

I cannot change, as others do,
  Though you unjustly scorn,
Since that poor swain that sighs for you,
  For you alone was born.
No, Phillis, no, your heart to move
  A surer way I'll try;
And to revenge my slighted love,
  Will still love on, will still love on, and die.



When killed with grief, Amyntas lies,
  And you to mind shall call
The sighs that now unpitied rise,
  The tears that vainly fall;
That welcome hour that ends this smart,
  Will then begin your pain;
For such a faithful tender heart
  Can never break, can never break, in vain.

GREAT MEN IN LITTLE WORLDS.

By GEORGE GISSING.

III.—THE FIREBRAND.

AT the age of eighteen, Andrew Mowbray Catterick vanished from among his kith and kin. They soon learnt that he was gone to London, and as this movement had been foreseen for a long time, the North-country folk made no fuss about it; if London proved too much for him, he had only to come back. Mrs. Catterick enjoyed a comfortable four hundred per annum, which at her death would be divided between Andrew and his sister. That the lad took his resolve and acted quietly upon it, without taxing anyone or calling for applause, seemed a point in his favour. If hitherto he had earned no high esteem, he had done nothing to be ashamed of. Rather an idle dog—said his impartial acquaintances—and a trifle given to self-praise; but no one denied his cleverness. At Mapplebeck, a grey and sooty little town ringed about with collieries, he was not likely to do much good, and his "gift of the gab," as people called it, would sooner or later involve him in difficulties. A young fellow in a public office should not meddle with politics, and can gain nothing by displays of oratory at pot-houses frequented by pitmen. Let him shift for himself in a larger world. Five pounds or so was the fortune he carried with him; capable men have gone forth and conquered with much less.

From eighteen to three-and-twenty, Andrew doubtless had a hard time of it. He wrote very seldom, and disregarded invitations to visit the old home. Such reports as he made were of dubious complexion; that he lived was clear, but no one at Mapplebeck knew exactly how. Writing, however, on his twenty-third birthday, the young man announced that he had secured regular employment as a journalist in connection with two London papers; and presently he began to send specimens of his work. Mrs. Catterick, the widow of a town-clerk, and herself much respected in the Conservative society of Mapplebeck, thought it a sad pity that her son persevered in revolutionary opinion; she did not care to circulate the newspapers he posted to her. Miss Bertha, now engaged to a solicitor of a neighbouring town, felt proud that Andrew had made such progress, and declared her indifference to his views if only he achieved a good position. Before long the journalist sent down a series of articles which he said were attracting attention—descriptions of obscure industries in London and elsewhere. He spoke, too, of allowing himself a holiday, and of coming home.

A couple of months elapsed without more news. Then, on an evening of September, Andrew presented himself at his mother's door.

It was difficult to recognise him. Not only had time converted the lanky stripling into a tall, wiry specimen of bearded manhood, but he looked so deplorably ill that Mrs. Catterick's first exclamation was one of alarm. As if the journey had overtaxed him, he dropped upon the nearest chair, and wiped moisture from his clay-coloured face. Yes, he was seedy. He had been overdoing it. He must have a good long rest. Mother and sister straightway devoted themselves to nursing him. The old doctor, friend of his childhood, was called into council. Andrew talked to him with a quiet air of condescension, yet as if grateful for the kindness with which he was surrounded.

"Sleep? Oh, my dear doctor! I haven't slept for a year or so. Sleep is such an expensive luxury, a journalist making his way has to do without it. Meals? Oh, I really forget. I eat now and then, I believe. Why, yes; not long ago I dined at the National Liberal Club with the editor of the *Morning Star*, so on that occasion, at all events, I ate. But, do you know, I find a bit of anchovy toast and a glass of cognac about the best thing, on most days. I suppose I ruined my stomach with *vache enragée*."

"What in the world is that?" asked the good doctor.

"Merely a pedantry for starvation, my dear Sir. For three or four years I had simply nothing to eat. We all go through it, you know. A friend of mine, a novelist, says he thinks nothing of the man who hasn't starved to begin with. At the same time, I drank rather too much. What would you have? Nervous force must be kept up somehow."

The doctor began to entertain a suspicion that this habit of drinking was not yet outgrown; he privately doubted whether Andrew's state of collapse had anything to do with excessive toil. In a day or two, however, he felt sure that his misgivings were unjustifiable. Catterick's case allowed of but one diagnosis: the young man had lived preposterously, but not as a debauchee. He had worked himself like a machine, disregarding every admonition of rebellious nature.

"And do you imagine, Andrew, that this kind of thing will lead to anything except the grave?"

"I can't keep it up; that I have discovered. But so far it has paid. The editors know me. Nowadays, doctor, a man who aims at success in any profession must be content to take his chance between that and death. If I don't get out of the ruck I may as well die."

Talk in this vein amused the old practitioner, who regarded his patient as a boy, and studied in him the latest forms of puerile conceit. But not everyone could listen so urbanely. Robert Holdsworth, who came over to make the acquaintance of his future brother-in-law, had much ado to disguise contemptuous irritation; he resented the easy patronage of Andrew's behaviour, and half believed him a disreputable impostor. Talking privately with Bertha, he asked why her brother had allowed so many years to pass without visiting his relatives.

"Oh," replied the girl, with a laugh, "he made a confession about that only yesterday. His pride wouldn't let him come till he had done something that people could talk about."

"Andrew's pride seems to be the great feature of his character," Holdsworth remarked drily. "And what *has* he done? A little anonymous journalism. I don't think that justifies his airs."

"He does put it on rather. But, you know, he has worked frightfully!"

"So have a good many people."

"Yes; but it's a great thing to write for London newspapers—don't you think? And he has made friends with such a lot of important men."

Andrew took care that his arrival at Mapplebeck should be made known by the local paper. A short biography appeared in its columns, and the writer expressed his deep regret that Mr. Catterick had been ordered to abstain for the present from all literary work.

"This is the penalty paid by too many of our rising journalists. The conditions of modern journalism are terribly trying, and a young man of Mr. Catterick's distinguished ability is tempted to efforts beyond the endurance of human nature."

With old acquaintances, most of whom were very sober and practical folk, Andrew made ostentatious display of his advanced opinions. He gave the good people to understand that Mapplebeck was a very sleepy little place, a century or so behind the civilisation which he himself represented. Occasionally he met with blunt answers, but they moved him only to a smile. People might say of him what they liked, if only they recognised his enormous advance in the interval since he disappeared from Mapplebeck. Superior to ordinary conversation, he discoursed in lively monologues, generally standing. His inquiries about local affairs were made in an indulgent tone. He deigned to show interest in the histories of young men, his contemporaries, who still remained in the town.

"Ah! Poor old Robertson! I must have a talk with him. And Tom Gerard has three children. Amazing! It passes my comprehension how a fellow of any brains—and Tom *had* brains—can handicap himself in that way. Men don't marry nowadays—not till they have *arrived*."

But about this time the local mind began to be occupied with a question which ultimately proved of national concern. Throughout the mining districts there was talk of an impending coal strike. Catterick, whose recuperative powers had soon overcome the grave symptoms of his disorder, amused himself with walking about the neighbourhood and holding converse with pitmen; whence it naturally came to pass that he one day found himself haranguing a coaly group, to whom he expounded the principles of modern industrial liberty. He came home in an excited state of mind, and from the hearthrug repeated to his mother and sister the oration he had publicly delivered.

"I think it very wrong to go talking in that way," declared Mrs. Catterick. "You may make a deal of trouble."

"Very likely," Andrew replied, with modest allusion to his powers as an agitator.

"You have no business to encourage these men to strike," exclaimed his sister. "And what will our friends say if they hear of it?"

The suggestion confirmed Andrew in a resolve. A strike there undoubtedly would be, sooner or later, and how could he more profitably occupy his leisure than in helping to bring it about? The public eye would at once be fixed on him; with care and skill he might achieve more than local distinction, and the journalistic matter thus supplied to him would be all in the way of business.

A mile or so beyond Mapplebeck was a colliers' hamlet known as Pit Row; it consisted literally of a row of cottages set on the black soil hard by a coalpit—grimy little boxes, all built precisely alike, with a plot of sorry garden in front of each and behind them the walled back-yards, where shirts and petticoats flapped in sooty air. Andrew decided to open his

HE CAME HOME IN AN EXCITED STATE OF MIND, AND FROM THE HEARTHRUG REPEATED TO HIS MOTHER AND SISTER THE ORATION HE HAD PUBLICLY DELIVERED.

campaign at Pit Row. Thither he went on a Sunday morning, and inquired for Sam Dollop, a collier whose acquaintance he had made in casual talk on the road. Sam was a local firebrand, and it flattered him to be associated with a gentleman from London who had exactly his views as to the rights of the miner. Easily enough they collected the inhabitants of Pit Row; speeches were made, and Andrew scored an important point when he uttered a sentence or two in the dialect of his hearers. Mapplebeck, he went on to assure them, was his native place. He stood here as no interloper. From childhood's days he had regarded with compassion the hard lot of men who toiled underground; and now that fortune had favoured him, now that he had won, by sheer hard work, a somewhat prominent place in metropolitan journalism, he felt it to be only his duty to come down and take part with his old friends in their struggle against the avarice of capitalists.

He had not long to wait for the public effect of these proceedings. Respectable Mapplebeck talked indignantly of his reckless and wicked meddling with troubles in which he had no concern. Mrs. Catterick's friends came to condole with her, knowing how strongly she disapproved of her son's politics. Andrew himself was stopped in the street by an old gentleman, who asked him severely what his good father would have thought of such doings, and advised him, if he must needs be working mischief, to go and speechify elsewhere. The town's one newspaper, which called itself "independent," and tried to please everyone, came out with an article vaguely deprecating the interference of outsiders in industrial disputes. Andrew replied in a long letter, printed the following week, wherein he justified himself on high grounds, economical and moral: it was the duty, he maintained, of all enlightened men to use these opportunities for a protest against the grinding tyranny of the present social system. He had deliberately taken off his coat, and was going to work with a full sense of the responsibilities he incurred. He might mention that he had carefully inquired into the state of the mining population in this district, and the results of his inquiries would shortly be made public in one of the leading organs of advanced opinion.

His "facile pen," as the local paper would have called it, knocked off a couple of sensational reports, which presently appeared in a London evening journal. Copies were in demand at Mapplebeck, and the county press made its comments sympathetic or denunciatory. Andrew congratulated himself on the circumstances which had brought him hither just at this time. Mapplebeck would come to regard him as a terrible fellow. He looked impatiently for the actual outbreak of the strike, when, with a little effort, he might play a part of more than local distinction.

Meanwhile, Mr. Robert Holdsworth viewed with keen annoyance the pranks of his future relative. This prudent young man by no means relished the thought of celebrating his marriage with Miss Catterick at a moment when Andrew was incurring the odium of all well-to-do people in the district. He came over to talk plainly of the matter; and Bertha, distressed by his grave representations, was driven to propose that their wedding should be put off till the next year.

"It's no use saying anything to Andrew; he is really very selfish. I think mother ought to tell him that we can't have him here any longer."

"So do I," replied Holdsworth emphatically. "His behaviour is simply monstrous. Your mother will feel the effects of it for long enough."

Andrew was away, carrying the fiery cross. When he returned, late at night, mother and sister united in a very strong appeal to him. Couldn't he see the inconvenience, to say the least, that he was causing them? If he was well enough to go about making speeches, had he not better return to London?

"I am obliged to stay here," answered the journalist, with forbearance. "Not only my interest, but my duty, forbids me to turn back from the work I have undertaken. But, of course, I need not remain in this house. I admit all you urge, and to-morrow I will look about for a lodging."

To this Mrs. Catterick could not assent, and the discussion was prolonged to an unheard-of hour. Andrew, when he understood the difficult position in which his sister was placed, held firm to his self-denying ordinance; he would forego the comforts of home, and lodge somewhere in the neighbourhood. This step would declare to all and sundry that the ladies dissociated themselves from his obnoxious principles.

And on the morrow the change was made. Andrew felt a glow of conscious virtue; no one could say that he had not behaved with scrupulous honour. He wrote a touching letter to Holdsworth,

explaining his sacrifice, and enlarging upon its meritorious features. The solicitor replied in a line or two of formal civility.

Catterick had aptitude for the work of an agitator. His harangues were not merely fluent and spirited, they testified to a sincerity of feeling with which the casual observer would not have credited Andrew. Himself acquainted with hardships, he did, in fact, sympathise with the employed as against the capitalist. His whole bent of mind engaged him to the democratic standpoint; his interests were all in combative modernism. Robert Holdsworth, deeming him a noisy charlatan, did justice neither to his abilities nor to the motives of his conduct; yet there was a weak point in Andrew which the lawyer accidentally discovered, and which he resolved to attack by an ingenious stratagem. Talking confidentially of her brother, Bertha had mentioned that in boyhood he was anything but remarkable for courage.

"If there 's any rioting," she said, "I 'm quite sure he 'll get out of the way. It 's a pity he can't have a good fright. He would soon find that business called him to London."

Holdsworth said little, but he reflected and schemed.

A few days after this Andrew received a letter addressed in a rude, sprawling hand, the writing of someone who barely knew how to hold a pen. The contents were with difficulty decipherable, but seemed to run thus:

"Mr. Caterikk, us three chaps as made up our moind to-night to wright to yo we work at a pit and weeve gotten wives and childer and we downt want to see them go hungery weer badly of as it is and we downt bileve a strike will mak it better so us chaps as mad up oor mind to give yo fare worning if the lads about here cum out on strike yol hear from us were not thretning yor life but well give yo the best threshin yo iver had sens yo was born thers three sticks redy and ef we go to jale for it thell be more bread fort wive and childer so look out."

HOLDSWORTH SAID LITTLE, BUT HE REFLECTED AND SCHEMED.

This same morning Andrew learnt that in a neighbouring county the strike had already begun. In a day or two great numbers of colliers would have left their work, and all but certainly those round about Mapplebeck would join in the movement. They were a particularly rough lot of men, and, as he well knew, eager to try their strength with the masters. He knew equally well that individuals among them, looking forward to short commons and

fireless hearths, secretly cursed the agencies which threw them out of employment; and this letter from the nameless trio seemed to him an undoubtedly genuine threat. Its very moderation (he had only to fear bruises and indignity) was an alarming feature of the menace. For a long time he sat with the letter in his hand thinking anxiously.

The postmark was Mapplebeck. Impossible to determine to what pit these three men belonged. His mind's eye surveyed whole crowds of grimy faces, and everywhere saw hostility in the white upturned orbs.

First came the natural impulse to make public his danger. It would be a proud moment. "Behold this infamous production! Do you imagine that a base threat such as this can for a moment shake my purpose? See, I tear it into fragments, and scatter it to the winds!" Acquaintances in Mapplebeck would admire his scornful indifference, or, at all events, talk the more about him. "He receives threatening letters. Hired ruffians have vowed to beat him within an inch of his life." But was he actually indifferent? When all the pitmen of the locality were idle, would he care to walk about byways, or go home to his lodgings on a dark night? He hoped to make a figure during the strike, and to send journalistic correspondence to London; he must move freely hither and thither at all hours, affording his enemies abundant opportunity to waylay him. Well, was it not what a public man had to expect? Who that takes part in industrial warfare can feel secure from outrage? If the fellows thrashed him, they were not likely to escape, and here again would be a splendid advertisement.

Yes; but the thrashing itself. Three sturdy colliers, armed with three big sticks, and only inclined to stop short of murder. His bones would ache for some time, be sure of it. He had never undergone a thrashing, not even as a boy. He had never fought; for, as his sister truly affirmed, physical courage was not his strong point. As he thought and thought, the drops came out upon his forehead.

For the present he would keep this letter in his pocket, and speak of it to no one.

He went into the town, and kept an appointment with a fellow-worker in the bar-room of the principal hotel. "Grand news!" exclaimed his friend, a provincial journalist without employment. At Baker's Pits, that morning, a notice was posted which would be sure to bring matters to a head: before evening the men would all be out. They must go at once——

Andrew felt a chill run down his back.

"It's a confounded nuisance!" he began blusteringly. "I have a letter from my editor. He wants me to go at once to the Clegg Valley district. I've half a mind to wire back that I must see it out here."

But the friend thought this imprudent. His own ambitions clashed somewhat with Catterick's, and he would not be sorry to see the fiery orator depart for the Clegg Valley or elsewhere.

"It's a beastly nuisance!" repeated Andrew, wondering how soon after the declaration of a strike at Baker's Pits his bludgeon-armed foes would start on the war-path. Perhaps this very evening would see them lying in wait for him. "I think I shall stay."

He drank a glass of whisky, but it had no effect whatever upon his state of mind. Ah!—he said to himself—this was manifestly the result of nervous breakdown. He had not recovered from his illness; he had been over-exciting himself when what he needed was repose. Why, his limbs trembled under him! No, no; he was not such a poltroon as all that! In reasonable health he could have faced the peril, which, after all, might be imaginary. Those fellows would not dare to attack him—why, it would be as much as their lives were worth! But a dark night—the lonely road near his lodgings — faces masked—they might, perhaps, do it with impunity. Cold sweat again started on his forehead.

And all the time his friend was counselling him not to neglect the editor's instructions.

"My people at home yonder," said Andrew with a smile, "would be glad enough if I took myself off. Perhaps I owe it to them to make the sacrifice. I must think it over quietly for a few minutes. You go over to Pit Row. If I don't come presently you shall hear from me."

He sat in the hotel for nearly an hour, and only strangers entered. At length appeared a shopkeeper with whom he was slightly acquainted.

"Well, Mr. Catterick, I suppose this is a great day for you? I hear that Baker's men have come out."

Andrew smiled, but could not at once reply.

"Sure of it?" fell from his lips, when he had moistened them.

"It's the talk in the town, at all events. And I daresay you know more about it than most people."

Andrew rose, nodded, and left the hotel.

He walked quickly to his mother's house, and cast many glances about him in the quiet suburban road which led thither. It began to rain, but he did not put up his umbrella. Mrs. Catterick and Bertha were sitting by the fireside, talking about the price of coals; his abrupt entrance—for he walked in without ringing the bell—made them start up in apprehension.

"What has happened? Why do you look so?"

"Nothing. I've done my work, that's all, and I'm off."

"Oh, thank goodness!" cried Bertha.

"You know that the colliers are on strike everywhere? Sorry for what it'll cost you in coals," he laughed noisily, "but you mustn't mind that. I have to rush off to the Clegg Valley—seat of war—telegram from London. Done all that I can here. Bertha, will you do me a kindness?"

"Certainly."

"Take a cab to my lodgings, pack up all my things, leave them at the station cloak-room, and keep the receipt till I send for it. It's all I shall do to catch my train. I thought of staying here to see the fun out, but I should rile an important man if I declined to go. And as you two rejoice, it's just as well. Explain to Holdsworth, will you? Sorry I couldn't say good-bye to him. But I *hope* to come down for your wedding, Bertha. Rather I didn't? Well, well, I quite understand; no harm done. You'll have broader views some day. Good-bye! Not one minute to lose."

And away he sped.

In a few days Holdsworth was at Mapplebeck. He listened with a grave smile to the repetition of what Bertha had already told him in a letter.

"And he went off in a tremendous hurry?"

"Hardly time to say a dozen words. This morning he writes from London, and I have to send on his luggage."

"From London? I'm surprised he could do his work for the newspaper so soon!"

"He says it was too exciting for him—he was falling ill again."

Holdsworth could not feel absolutely sure that his stratagem had got rid of the firebrand. Andrew's explanations might be all true; yet he disappeared on the very day when that threatening letter must have reached him; and, what was more, on the day when the strike began at Baker's Pits. In any case an odd and amusing coincidence.

Drawn by Constance Foxley.

JAPANESE MATCH-BOX LABELS.

EVERYONE who has read Anatole France's delightful book "Le Crime de Silvestre Bonnard," will remember the prince and princess who were so surfeited

with wealth, and all that wealth could give, that they would have found life unbearable had they not suddenly developed a taste for collecting match-boxes, or, rather, match-box labels. This gave them quite a new interest in life, and in the pursuit of a rare specimen they were ready to plunge into the most dreaded resorts of Corsican brigands.

Probably when M. Anatole France wrote his novel, he never seriously contemplated the collection of match-box labels as ever likely to become a popular hobby; but, although the mania has hardly spread to England, in India, the Straits, China, and Japan there are hundreds of collectors among our countrymen of the match-box label. The art of designing pretty labels for match-boxes may be said to have originated in Sweden, for our great English manufacturers, Messrs. Bryant and May, were for years content with the appropriate but simple design of the Ark of Safety, with the well-known inscription, "Light only on the box." This sentence, by the way, a Calcutta Baboo has adopted for his family motto, probably confounding it with "Heaven's light our guide." The Japanese, however, have made the art of match-making especially their own. They commenced by barefaced and colourable imitations of the Swedish matches and marks, but they now certainly command the Eastern market. Their matches are every whit as good as the Swedish ones, and in the matter of match-box labels, with which we are more immediately concerned, they show no end of fantastic, if not artistic, imagination, as our designs will show. For the Eastern collector the Calcutta Bazaar holds out great facilities. For a very trifling sum it is possible to obtain from the vendors of matches in Canning Street a hundred or two of specimens in one day. In Calcutta the craze for these collections has spread so much that a class of match-box brokers has arisen among the natives, but they

make their living not from the sale of what we should consider rarities, but from selling European or American labels. These match-brokers board every steamer as she

arrives in the Hughli from a Western port and chaffer with the sailors for the match-boxes they may have brought with them

from London, Glasgow, and Liverpool; and these empty boxes, for the sake of the label, often fetch in Calcutta or Bombay about one hundred times the value of the full box when it was sold in England. A collection of about one thousand different match-box labels was recently sold in Calcutta for the respectable sum of six hundred rupees, or about forty pounds. This form of "collecting" has not made much head-way in England at present; but there is no knowing what may happen, and there is no doubt that the labels can be mounted in an album with far more effect than postage-stamps. Anyone who has seen a collection of the Japanese labels will acknowledge that far more pains have been taken to make the plain little match-box attractive than has ever been attempted in our country, where the article has only been considered from the useful point of view, and not from the ornamental.

The prince and princess of the romance referred to were haunted by the dread that their collection would some day be complete, and that they then would have nothing more to live for. If they had

heard of Japanese labels they might have kept their minds easy on this score, for there seems to be no end to the designs of the Japanese match-manufacturers.

A REMARKABLE NIDIFICATION.

BUCEROTIDÆ, OR FAMILY OF THE HORNBILLS.

By JAMES BUCKLAND.

HORNBILLS can boast not only of many peculiar structural characters, which make them so differ from other birds that they have no near affinities, but also of a remarkable mode of nidification which is not paralleled by the nesting habits of any other species of feathered animals known to man. Directly the task of incubation commences, the male bird plasters up the nest—keeping the female a close prisoner until the eggs are hatched.

This marked group is distinguished at first sight by the enormous size of the bill, the grotesque and uncouth appearance of which is in most cases further increased by the addition of an unsightly protuberance on the upper mandible.

I have sketched the Elate hornbill, from West Africa (*Ceratogymna elata*), and the South African Ground hornbill, from Nyassaland (*Bucorvus cafer*), both of which are inmates of the Zoological Gardens in Regent's Park. The drawings will give you a general idea of the appearance of this group of birds. You should remark the long, strong eyelashes, the possession of which is a peculiarity of the family.

Little is really known of the economy and habits of many of the species. Those, of course, whose habitat is India, or the colonised districts of South Africa, have been well observed; but the depths of the trackless forests of Africa south of the Great Desert of Sahara, the hot green gloom of the jungles of the Malay Archipelago, and the heavily timbered ranges of Indo-China—all of which places are favourite haunts of the hornbill — are localities not often penetrated by Europeans. Moreover, the bird is wild and wary to a degree, active and alert—notwithstanding the magnitude of its bill—and careful to keep to the thickest jungle and to the tallest trees.

Nevertheless, as a result of the self-imposed wanderings of sons of science, we know the race to be a numerous one. Twenty-seven Ethiopian and thirty-one Oriental representatives of the family have been already catalogued. But it is by no means certain that the list is complete.

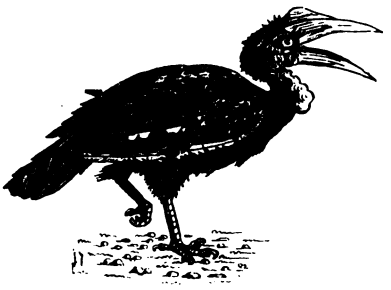
They are, in general, large animals. The Great Hornbill (*Homraius bicornis*), the *homrai—i.e.*, king of the jungles—of the Nepalese attains a length of four feet,

THE ELATE HORNBILL, WEST AFRICA.

while the long-legged South African Ground hornbill, the "snake-bird" of the Kaffirs, is very like a big black turkey with a false nose. The smallest known member of the family is the red-billed hornbill, of the River Limpopo (*Tocus erythrorhynchus*), which also is to be seen in Regent's Park.

The group is clothed in somewhat sober raiment, the prevailing colours being black and white. Some of the species, however, are attractive enough in their garb.

Although the hornbill is almost omnivorous, its principal food consists of fruit. The exception to the general rule is the "snake-bird." This is a very voracious fellow. It gobbles up grubs, beetles,



THE SOUTH AFRICAN GROUND HORNBILL.

spiders, locusts, scorpions, lizards, land-tortoises, snakes, and, indeed, anything that crosses its path. There is nothing edible you could mention that its taste would eschew.

On account of the gullet of the *Bucerotidæ* being very wide, and of nearly equal diameter as far as the gizzard, one manner of feeding is common to all. The bird takes the food in the point of its beak, throws its head backward with a jerk, opens its cavernous jaws, and drops the morsel into its stomach as into a bucket.

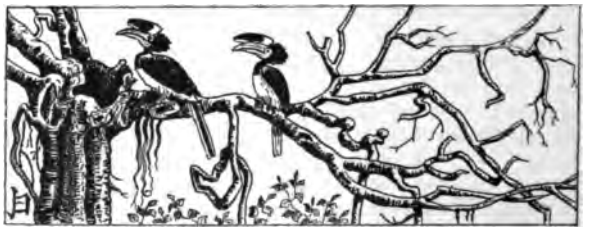
The cry of some of the species is not surpassed in power by any sound an animal is capable of making. We must turn to the demoniacal sirening of an Atlantic liner in a fog to find a blast that will compare favourably with it. When burst suddenly upon the ear in the silence of the green twilight of the jungles of the East Indies, the noise is sufficient to inspire terror. During the months of January and February, which are the breeding season, the clamour is amazing, and becomes a serious nuisance to a quiet village. The natives of Java call the hornbill "the worker," from the noise it makes. There are cases analogous to this in our own country, where great reputations for work are sometimes built up out of nothing but noise.

Although the hornbill seems to have no place in Hindu mythology, the Eastern races have spun a web of charming fancies about it, and it is more or less concerned in their minds with certain quaint ideas and beliefs. But in South Africa the power of the snake-bird is, to the Kaffir mind, illimitable, and its person is regarded with a reverence amounting to awe. They have a superstition that if one is slain all sorts of dreadful things will happen. It affords, too, a fertile source of omens, and is made the subject of some curious practices, full of mysteries and absurdities.

It is worthy of remark that as a weather prophet the predictions of the hornbill are more reliable than even the forecasts of the Meteorological Office. By a peculiar cry it foretells any coming atmospheric disturbances, although there may be no actual appearance of change at the time. This cry is pitched in a tone of joy, for the bird suffers considerably from excessive heat, and has a great longing for moisture. It vastly enjoys a good shower, and gets wet with the keen enjoyment of a schoolboy.

Its omnivorous habits enable the hornbill easily to endure confinement, and, although very savage when first taken, it soon becomes a most gentle and tractable pet. The homrai is an especial favourite, and tame ones are frequently to be met with in the villages of hill tribes. Its unintentional drolleries make it a miracle of humour. At the same time, the interest it excites in the breast of the Hindu is not always of a comic nature. In evil-minded moments chickens are apt to disappear down its capacious throat with a suddenness which must leave the tender mites ignorant of the fact that they are dead.

A hole in a decaying or a dead tree affords the hornbill a natural breeding-place. You will observe in the drawing which appears below a pair of crowned



CROWNED HORNBILLS SELECTING A NEST IN A DEAD BANIAN.

hornbills (*Anthracoceros coronatus*) inspecting such a place in a dead banian with a view of taking it as a residence. As a rule, no attempt is made to form a proper nest. The eggs, which are white, and from one to five in number, are laid upon little pieces of soft or rotten wood which the

bird has pecked from the inside of the trunk. The trees usually selected are the banian, the pipal, or some other species of *ficus*. Preference is given to these because the wood is soft, and because they afford a plentiful supply of fruit.

As soon as the eggs are laid the hen goes into the nest and does not reappear until her brood is ready for flight. Within three days after the task of incubation has commenced the male bird has firmly closed the orifice with a plaster consisting of twigs, mud, leaf-mould, and the birds' own droppings. In this work it employs its bill in a way very similar to that in which a mason plies his trowel. Occasionally the hen assists in the operation, pushing her ordure from the nest for the purpose. When the work is completed, the hole is plastered up with the exception of a vertical slit, no longer, but a little wider, than one's middle finger. Through this aperture the immured bird is just able to thrust the point of her bill, and so receive sustenance.

Like all animals which are monogamous, the pleasant trait of mutual affection is strongly developed in the hornbill. From the time the lifelong wife enters the nest, the husband is most assiduous in his attentions. The gentleness and caution which he displays at this time are quite touching to witness. He ceases his hideous clamour and becomes quiet, or nearly so. When not occupied in his duties as purveyor—an onerous task, but one which he performs with unwearied industry—he sits by the nest to solace his docile partner, and to watch over her. Thus he will sit for hours in a wistful watchful melancholy, uttering from time to time little murmuring croaks of tender commiseration.

This subject is worth pursuing at greater length. The young keep with their parents many months after leaving the nest. If, during this companionship, any misfortune should befall one of them, the old birds remain for a considerable time near the fatal spot, flying from tree to tree, and uttering mournful cries which smite painfully upon the heart. If it is one of the old birds which is the victim, no element of pathos is wanting in the scene which follows its death.

So strong, indeed, is the affection of the hornbill for its mate that one of the species, the wreathed hornbill (*Rhytidoceros undulatus*) actually allows the green-eyed monster to disturb his peace. This ridiculous creature is known to the natives of Java as the "jealous bird," on account of the dragon-like surveillance it keeps over its consort. If the poor slave of a husband, looking a perfect fright by reason of his throat being ludicrously distended with the supply of fruit he is bringing home, happens to return to his domicile to find a strange spruce gentleman hornbill talking to his wife through the keyhole, so to call the vertical slit in the nest, he mistakes her amusement—although we know that the conversation of the innocent pair could have been only about the scarcity of figs that year, or the coming of the rains of the south-west monsoon—and, flying into a violent passion, betakes himself off, never to return.

The female moults during her long incarceration, and becomes ragged, dirty,

THE WREATHED HORNBILL BETAKES HIMSELF OFF.

cramped, and weak. If dragged from the hole, she is unable to fly—or to move even, except in short, clumsy hops. That she should get in this plight seems natural enough; but what does not seem natural—considering the fetid atmosphere and the filthy state of the nest—is that she sometimes should get grossly fat. When in this condition, her flesh is highly esteemed as food by the natives, and is much sought as a dainty.

The young birds are hatched quite naked, and not until they commence to put on plumage does the hen peck away the wall of plaster. Even then she does not come out of the nest until the fledgelings are ready for flight. Taken altogether, her confinement extends over a period of three months!

We are naturally led to ask, what is the origin of this remarkable mode of nidification? Many conjectures have been made as to its peculiar uses, but none of them satisfactorily account for the strange practice. It has been suggested that the plaster forms a barrier of defence against snakes and monkeys which might seek to assail the nest. But why should this bird take these precautionary measures more than another, less splendidly equipped for defence of its home? It is no easy matter to rob the nest of a hornbill. In rage and despair the male bird flies frantically about, uttering frightful cries and opening its huge bill with an aspect of formidable menace, while the female fights from within in a way which not infrequently enables her successfully to resist all efforts to dislodge her. Nor is the fact that a man may be thus worsted in conflict with a bird to be wondered at when we consider that a blow from one of these powerful bills might easily produce very serious, if not fatal, results. I should feel really sorry for the snake or the monkey which attempted to interfere with the domestic affairs of a hornbill. Again, it has been said that the hen is immured while incubating her eggs because she is too weak and dull to fly away from any approaching danger. Her weakness is the result, not the cause, of her seclusion. Another ingenious individual has favoured us with the theory that the plastering is done with a view to increasing the temperature of the cavity. I do not think that the poor bird, which has to endure the dreadful stench of the hot black hole, would feel disposed to agree with this gentleman.

No. The development of the unique practice cannot be traced to any of these causes. Yet the bird must derive, or have derived, some advantage from the custom. Nature is not a purposeless worker.

It is the merest conjecture, but I am of the opinion that it is a traditional instinct dating back to a remote age, when there dwelt upon the earth some animal, wholly unknown to us, which, in the general struggle for existence, compelled the hornbill to fortify its home against attack. I am strengthened in this belief because, as I have already said, the Bucerotidæ have no near affinities among birds, and are probably the lingering representatives of a feathered race which, with other animals equally strange, once inhabited that great continent of which the East India Islands are but the débris.

QUAINT MARKEN.

By CHARLES S. PELHAM-CLINTON.

An undoubted result of our modern civilisation is the destruction of old landmarks, and the reduction to a monotonous dead level of the costumes of the world. In a few places, however, we still find the primitive habits and the primitive costumes of the inhabitants preserved, but such spots are very few and far between. One of these spots is the quaint little island of Marken, in the Zuyder Zee, though it is very hard to determine why an island so close to a large city like Amsterdam, and apparently having such a large amount of intercourse with it, should have retained its simple customs and primitive costumes all these years. Perhaps the reason is to be found in the shallow water which surrounds it and prevents any but local boats from reaching its shores; but when the reclamation of the Zuyder Zee becomes an accomplished fact—and that it will do so there is but little doubt—quaint Marken and its still quainter inhabitants will be among the things of the past.

The island can be reached from Monnikadam, which is best reached by the light railways that form a network all over Holland, and from which we might easily take a lesson, and is about an hour's sail from that old-world little Dutch village. The usual way of getting there, however, is by the Sunday steamer from Amsterdam, which, during the summer, takes a large number of excursionists who wish to see one of the most curious spots in Western Europe.

After leaving Amsterdam the boat passed through the locks into the Zuyder Zee, and eventually came to an anchor about a mile from the island, which even at this distance appeared little more than a bank with a forest of masts rising from the harbour, and a few steeples and lighthouses. A couple of broad-bowed fishing-smacks soon made their appearance from the harbour, and we were at once made acquainted with the curious costume worn by the men of Marken, which consists of a species of shirt or tight-fitting coat, buttoned at the side, made of dark blue or brown serge, having a double row of black buttons, the top being fastened by a double gold button in the form of a link. The boys' coats, as a rule, had a silver button, but the men, almost without exception, had the more precious metal. A coloured kerchief was loosely tied round the neck, and on the head was a close-fitting cap with a shiny peak. It was the breeches, however, that were so extraordinary, there being more stuff in each leg than in an ordinary woman's skirt; and when the wind blew against it and spread out the folds it fairly astonished one: gathered in at the waist and at the knee, the size was accentuated by a perfectly straight leg, in almost every case devoid of calf, covered with a dark blue stocking, or in some cases a gaiter, and a wooden sabot, which was kicked off on board ship, the sole of the stocking being covered with leather.

The men on the boats were a specimen of what we saw all over the island, being tall and powerfully made, with harsh but not unpleasant features, one curious idiosyncrasy being that I did not see a single man with the peak of his cap straight on his head.

The number of people these skimming-dishes which are used for fishing-boats on the Zuyder Zee can carry is extraordinary, and the whole of our steamer's passengers were speedily on board the two smacks, which soon took us through the entrance to the harbour, where we were greeted by a throng of at least two hundred children and grown-up people, all of whom were dressed in the costume of the island. I dare say to Marken eyes our costumes seemed fully as quaint as theirs did to us; and even to ourselves some of those on board were got up in a fashion that excited one's risible faculties.

What first attracted me was the extraordinary shape of the children, none of whom were less than twice the width round the hips that they were round the chest. I found, however, that art, and not nature, had caused this extraordinary phenomenon, the Marken idea of beauty in a lady's

A YOUNG GIRL OF MARKEN.

figure being by no means what it is in other countries, where a slim figure is the aim and object of female existence. I did not make an anatomical examination of the Marken women's costumes, but the ladies of our party did, and I was informed that the tub-like effect in both them and the children was produced by a number of padded petticoats, which are first put on and then covered by the plain red or blue serge skirt which forms the outer dress, and which has a sort of worked band at the waist. The bodice of the dress is very quaint, and consists of three separate visible pieces; of the invisible parts I can tell nothing, but the length of the arm is covered by a sleeve of much the same material as that of which the dress is formed. As far down as the elbow come the sleeves of a sort of shirt of cambric or linen, the collar of which appears occasionally at the throat, though, as a rule, this is closely covered up with a kind of over-corsage worked in many colours on a red or blue ground. The hair is worn in plaits at either side in front of the ears, the front hair being cut short and appearing just below the headdress, which is of white cambric, rather like a night-cap, tied close over the ears, and on gala occasions having a second cap worked in bright colours partially pulled over it. The whole effect is quaint in the extreme, and the children—for boys also, until six or seven years old, wear the same dress—clatter about in their wooden sabots, not disdaining, though they may be the offspring of the local capitalist, to beg for coin or pose for coppers before the camera.

The women's costumes are made during the long winter, and it takes many months to work their intricate patterns, but, when finished, they last a very long time. No other costume is to be seen among the women of the island; old and young alike are dressed the same, and fashions have not altered in the past century or two, and from the sabots to the top of the starched headdress the Marken belle of to-day is dressed in exactly the same way as her great-great-grandmother was in the year of grace 1700.

The island itself is rescued from the encroachments of the sea by the embankments so general in Holland, and the inhabitants, of whom there are about one thousand, live in seven villages built on a corresponding number of mounds, which

WOMEN OF MARKEN.

prevent the encroachments of the floods which every year partially cover the island, the water having to be pumped out by the curious little windmills to be seen on every side. The men gain their living by fishing, and they are said to be the best fishermen in the Zuyder Zee, and they are so thrifty that the larger number have considerable sums laid by.

The houses are mostly two-storeyed, a very narrow staircase or else a ladder leading to the upper rooms; their cleanliness is extraordinary, and the art treasures to be found in some of the poorest-looking cottages are a matter for surprise to everybody who visits the island. Not one of these treasures will the Marken fishermen dispose of, and no offer will tempt them to sell the quaintly carved chairs and charming pieces of delf, the curious old Dutch

A FISHERMAN OF MARKEN.

clocks, or the old pictures that have in many cases been handed down from father to son for generations. They will sell the produce of their nets or the costumes worked during the winter, but these old heirlooms they will not part with, and the islander who would do so would have a sorry time of it in the future. Money has no fascination for them in this case. The small meadows, divided from each other by tiny canals, which are crossed in their turn by little swing hand-bridges, give just enough sustenance to the cows that supply milk for consumption fresh and for making cheese, while a few sheep eke out a poor existence and supply a certain amount of wool, more of this coming from the mainland, as does dress material and the flour and groceries consumed. There is not a tree on the island; and I do not remember seeing more than a dozen bushes, and these seemed to possess but a weak hold on life.

Uneventful as life is there, Marken has its history, for in the middle of the thirteenth century the Premontre monks established themselves on the island, building a cloister and a church, the latter being called Marienhot, and being dedicated to the Virgin Mary; it stood till 1845, though it was only built of wood, but in that year had to be pulled down, when it was replaced by the present structure, which is of little interest. The monks who erected the original building only remained on the island for about a century, and in 1346 Margaret, the wife of the Emperor Louis, ceded this amongst other islands to the burghers of Amsterdam. A hundred years later the inhabitants had so much increased in wealth that the island was worth the attention of their neighbours from Kampen, who paid it a visit and pillaged it, an attack which its fortunes never recovered, and the poverty of its inhabitants guarded them from further interference. Fire, however, has twice or three times in each century partially destroyed the various hamlets, but they have always sprung up again, maintaining their original plan of construction.

We had settled not to return on the steam-boat, but to pay a visit to Monnikadam instead, and the bargaining for a boat proved to us that, simple as he may be in appearance and dress, the fisherman of Marken is fully alive to the financial value of his services during the trip across the four miles of sea that intervene between his island and the mainland. However, a bargain was eventually struck, and in a few minutes, amidst the cheers of rotund children, we were gliding out of the harbour, and shortly afterwards the quaint island and its picturesque inhabitants were only a memory.

THE PAINTERS' JORDAN.

By GRANT ALLEN.

AMONG the earlier Italian works in the National Gallery few are more interesting than a certain composite altarpiece, vaguely described in the official catalogue as of the "School of Taddeo Gaddi," and representing in its central panel the familiar subject of the Baptism of Christ in Jordan. The treatment, of course, is somewhat hard and dry, as one might expect from its age; and the figures have that early angularity which moves the uncouth mirth of uncultured visitors; but as a moment in the development of the theme which it enshrines it seems to me a precious relic in the evolution of the art of painting.

The centre of the foreground is occupied by a small and very symbolical Jordan—a Jordan reduced, as it were, to its simplest and most beggarly elements. There is only just enough of it, in fact, to enable us to say, as the children write across their first rude attempts, "This is a river." Such purely symbolical Jordans, like symbolical temples and symbolical cities, were common in the earlier ages of art; and, what is odder still, they survived from the days of Giotto and Taddeo Gaddi, almost down to the days of Raphael and Michael Angelo. You can see another admirable example of very late date in the charming and sympathetic Piero della Francesca of the same subject, also in the National Gallery, about which, as melodramatists put it, "more anon."

The right side of the picture—I speak here and always from the spectator's point of view—is occupied by a most rugged and realistic St. John Baptist, clothed in a long garment of camel's hair, which, however, the artist has generously concealed during part of its length by a flowing robe of more luxurious woven fabric. The middle of the panel is filled by the constrained figure of the Saviour, girt with a small loincloth, and standing up to His knees in the symbolical river. On the right bank kneel two angels with towels, their faces intensely round and Giottesque, and their haloes displaying the usual frank solidity of the period. Two beetling crags, with extremely symmetrical trees, eke out the composition; above, the lightly sketched figure of the Eternal Father discharges a dove, representing the Holy Spirit, on the head of the Son with whom He is well pleased.

Now, this arrangement of the subject is conventional and formal, and it recurs again and again in the treatment of the Baptism from the earliest ages. As a rule, one finds on the extreme right of the picture the form of the Baptist; in the centre stands the Saviour, almost nude, in the symbolical river; and on the left we have one, two, or three angels holding a towel, according to the taste and fancy of the painter. Occasionally, it is true, especially in very early works, the sides are reversed, the Baptist occupying the left and the angels the right; but in the vast majority of Baptisms, during the great developmental age of Italian art (from Giotto to Raphael), the disposition is the same as in the "Altarpiece of the School of Taddeo Gaddi," and the treatment conforms, on the whole, to this typical instance.

The earlier history of the evolution of the type thus hardened into a convention by the thirteenth century is remarkable and interesting. The very first representations of the Baptism of Christ which we now possess are those which occur (as reliefs) on sarcophagi and (as mural paintings) on the walls of the Catacombs. A sarcophagus in the Lateran gives us, I believe, the most primitive realisation which has yet been noted of the historical scene; though still earlier allusions occur elsewhere in such symbolic forms as Noah in the Ark and the Passage of the Red Sea. In the relief on the sarcophagus, however, a wavy line of almost Egyptian simplicity represents the Jordan, while a gigantic Baptist, clad in a loincloth of camel's skin, pours water from a bowl over the head of the Saviour. He is standing on the left, not, as is usual in later representations, on the right of the composition;

but the attitude of the two chief persons, and especially the pose of the hand which holds the cup or bowl, is already that which was reproduced in later ages by

SCHOOL OF TADDEO GADDI.
In the National Gallery

numberless successive generations of artists. The "motive," as critics call it, was there from the beginning.

One point of difference exists, none the less, between this earliest Baptism and all later representations. There is as yet no trace of the angel. He makes his first appearance, so far as I have been able to observe, in the central mosaic of the cupola in the "Baptistery of the Orthodox," at Ravenna, a work which all modern critics assign to the fifth century. And he does so even there in a disguised form which curiously illustrates the transition from heathen to Christian art, and the way in which the conventional types of later ages were originally evolved from classical models. For the Ravenna mosaic, badly restored and much altered, still shows us a St. John with his jewelled cross on the left of the composition (left, not right, being the early usage), pouring water from a cup on the head of the Saviour, who occupies the middle of the work, and who stands, quite nude, up to his waist in the water of the river. The extreme right, however, is filled by a figure of the River-God of the Jordan, still represented quite frankly in the classical fashion. The age, indeed, saw as yet no incongruity in this intimate mixture of heathen and Christian conceptions. Genii and angels mingle with Job and Orpheus in picturesque confusion. The River-God has his head crowned with a wreath of water-weeds, and in his present form he holds a towel; but this towel I take, for a reason which will be apparent hereafter, to be a bad bit of false restoration. Originally, I feel sure, he must have poured water from an urn at his side, as is usual with all other classical river deities. The urn and its stream of water were later mistaken, in the faded condition, for a cloth or towel, and so improperly represented by the ignorant restorer. The cross which St. John holds is also almost certainly a later addition, which gives colour to the idea of the substitution of a towel for the primitive water-urn.

But why do I suppose the River-God of the Jordan originally held an urn instead of a towel? Well, for this reason. There is another most interesting mosaic at

Ravenna, in another church, now commonly known as Santa Maria in Cosmedin, but originally built as the Baptistery of the Arians. This mosaic is a century later than that which decorates the Baptistery of the Orthodox; for the round church whose ceiling it adorns was built after the capture of Ravenna by Theodoric and his Goths, who, of course, were Arians; while the earlier Baptistery of the Orthodox was erected and decorated under the Emperor Honorius, who naturally belonged to the Catholic party. Now, the Arians were evidently anxious to have a Baptistery of their own, just as good and fine as that of the Orthodox; so they not only imitated its shape but also decorated their ceiling with a counterpart mosaic of the Baptism of Christ, as nearly as possible after the fashion of its Catholic predecessor. The workmanship, indeed, as was natural in that age of rapid decadence, is far ruder than the beautiful handicraft of Honorius's time; but the composition is still approximately the same. Only, here the sides are reversed: the Baptist stands on the right of the work, and the Jordan holds, not a towel, but an urn. As this is the older classical usage of River-Gods, I feel sure that at the time when Italian workmen wrought this mosaic for the Gothic King, in close imitation of the Orthodox Baptistery, the Jordan in that earlier and finer composition

BAPTISTERY OF THE ORTHODOX.
Ravenna.

must still have held an urn, and not a towel. I may add that the Christ in the Arian work is youthful and beardless, as is also the usage in the earliest representations in the Catacombs and on the antique sarcophagi; while in the Orthodox mosaic he wears a beard, which I venture to believe is entirely due to later restoration. Certainly, the Arian work is older in type than the Orthodox in both these points, though later in the relative positions of the two chief actors; and I can therefore hardly avoid the conclusion that these portions of the earlier mosaic have been subsequently restored by an incompetent artist, who followed rather the usage of his own time than the decayed and doubtful lines of the original.

If this conjecture be right, then a fresco of the seventh century in the catacomb of St. Pontianus gives us the one other needful transitional stage to the mediæval treatment. Here, as in the Gothic mosaic, the positions have reached the more familiar form with St. John on the right, while on the left bank stands an angel with a towel, a clear Christianisation of the half-pagan River-God of the Ravenna compositions. I gather that as the earlier representations grew dim, the God was mistaken for a Christian angel, and the water by his side for a linen fabric.

BAPTISTERY OF THE ARIANS.
Ravenna.

By the time of Taddeo Gaddi's follower, the single angel, again, had grown into a pair, and the dove, which occurs both in the Ravenna examples and in the Catacomb

of St. Pontianus, was now launched direct from the visible hands of the Eternal Father. But in other respects, the

PIERO DELLA FRANCESCA.
In the National Gallery.

treatment through the Middle Ages remained closely similar; and examples for verifying it are peculiarly numerous, since this scene was, and still continues to be, the favourite subject for decorating the walls or ceilings or altarpieces of baptisteries. Another good example, indeed, occurs in the National Gallery itself in the graceful though somewhat pallid picture by Piero della Francesca in the Umbrian room. Notice here the continued relative positions of the Saviour and St. John, the pose of the hand which holds the patera,

and the angels, as usual, on the left bank. Only, observe that here they are increased to three; charming Umbrian angels, too, in open-mouthed devotion, whom you may well compare with the exquisite choir which hymns the Babe in Piero's "Nativity" close by, as well as with the endless singing angels who form so delicious and characteristic a feature in the paintings by Buonfigli and other Umbrians of his age in the Pinacoteca at Perugia. Look, in passing, also at the increased taste for landscape, which makes Piero substitute two or three well-painted trees on right and left for the symmetrical and purely symbolical bushes of Taddeo Gaddi's follower. Lastly, note how the increasing love of the Renaissance for the representation of the nude exhibits itself frankly in the figure of the man in the background, disrobing himself for baptism, and introduced for no other purpose than in order that the artist may show his technical mastery of anatomical drawing. Visitors to Florence will recollect the similar and famous instance of the young man on the walls of the Brancacci Chapel.

I may add that while classical boldness represented the figure of the Saviour entirely nude, the growing reverence of later days supplied him with a loincloth: but recouped itself, as it were, for this artistic sacrifice by frequently introducing other nude figures of penitents in the background.

The most celebrated representation of this frequent theme, however, is undoubtedly Andrea Verrocchio's calm and majestic masterpiece, originally painted for the convent of St. Salvi, and now in the Accademia delle Belle Arti at Florence. This is a picture which every visitor to Italy has admired, but which can only be really and fully understood by just this kind of comparison with other treatments of the theme by earlier artists. A noble and ascetic St. John, stern, lean, and full of desert character, stands in an attitude directly reminiscent of earlier usage, yet, oh, how much richer in life and movement! Cup and posture are the same, but life has been breathed into them. The Christ, though sombre and severe, more like a poverty-stricken Tuscan peasant than the ideal of Christendom, is yet nobly conceived; while the two attendant angels, loveliest among the angelic figures of the Florentine School, are so daintily beautiful that legend will have it the more graceful of the two was added surreptitiously to the master's work by the pencil of his great pupil, Leonardo da Vinci. And, indeed, even to a technical eye, there are signs about it of a still greater hand than that which drew the austere and characteristic Baptist. I would ask all my readers when they go again to Florence to look once more at this glorious work of a painter who has left us far too little, by the light of the comparative method which I have here endeavoured to focus slightly upon its theme and its antecedents.

THE SINKING OF THE "DRUMMOND CASTLE."

Drawn by W. H. Overend, from Information Supplied by Mr. Marquandt.

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MY VOYAGE ON THE DOOMED SHIP.

By CHARLES MARQUARDT.

I SPEAK of the *Drummond Castle* as the doomed ship, not because there was anything in the passage itself premonitory in the slightest degree of the disaster, but because the catastrophe which has startled the world was so unexpected, so sudden, so terrible, so near the end of a pleasant journey, that it seems as if a thunderbolt of fate had been stored up for us, and launched with quick intent on the hapless liner that now lies off the rocky coast of Brittany so much old iron. So far from there being any evil omen in our passage, wind and weather conspired together during almost the entire run to make our home-going an exceedingly pleasant one. My recollection of the incidents on board ship up to the fatal night is only a vague impression of propitious circumstances and agreeable companions, for life on board ship compels a comradeship that is unknown on shore. In my case, I should long have remembered my return on the *Drummond Castle* after the two years and a half I spent in Johannesburg—the latter part of the time in the thick of the revolution, albeit I was entirely a spectator on the outskirts of the intrigue; but now the whole thing is rivetted in my memory for ever by reason of the awful fate that overtook every living soul of my fellow-passengers on that terrible night in June.

It was a beautiful afternoon in May—the 28th to be quite precise—when we sailed out of Capetown on the *Drummond Castle*, with nearly two hundred and fifty souls on board, of whom two-thirds were passengers, homeward bound. The vessel was a familiar sight at the Cape. Though smaller than several of the Currie liners, she was a first rate sea-boat of proved capacity, for it was fifteen years since she had first taken the water—in the Clyde. She was an intermediate steamer, calling only at Las Palmas on the home journey, whereas the mail-boats look in at Madeira, and give passengers the option of disembarking at Plymouth. The intermediate boats, too, accomplish the journey in twenty-one days, against the nineteen days that the mail-boats require. Yet a more comfortable vessel than the *Drummond Castle* no one could demand. She was manned by a first-rate crew, a hundred strong, and the captain, Mr. W. W. Pierce, whom I got to know quite intimately from sitting near him at table, was a seaman of great experience, whose whole demeanour would have inspired the most timid travellers with the utmost confidence. Thus everything was in our favour, and as we left the Cape the crowd on the quay who came to see us off had not the shadow of a foreboding as to the end of our voyaging.

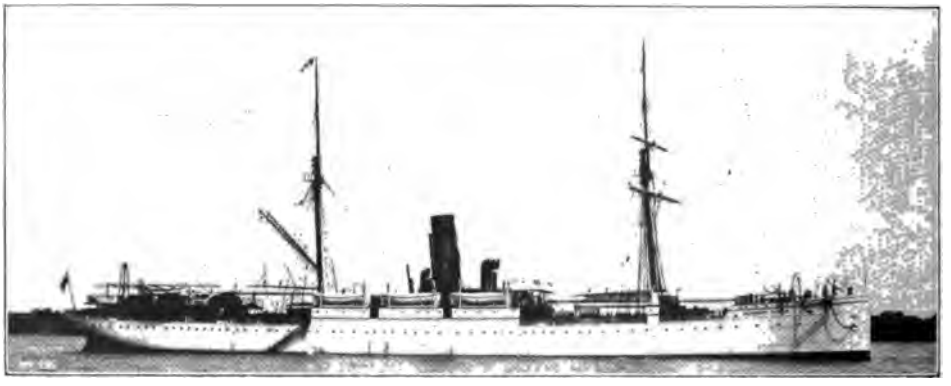
Ship life, as I have said, makes comradeship, and I soon got to know many of my fellow-passengers and their little life-stories, which, in view of the pleasure of home-coming, they did not struggle to conceal as they would have done had they been either in South Africa or in England. The smoking-room, which was situated in the extreme stern of the ship, was the great rendezvous for the men, and as my cabin was the second from the smoking-room, on the starboard side of the same deck, I was naturally in and out there a great deal. There were all sorts and conditions of men aboard. There was the veteran settler, Mr. Peachey, with eight or nine members of his family, who was coming on a visit to England, after having borne the heat and burden of the day in South Africa for many a year. There were the ten time-expired men from some of her Majesty's ships: good-natured jolly fellows, one of whom, Boatswain Motyer, was practically the last man I had the chance of talking with on board the ill-fated vessel. Some of the younger passengers, indeed, had never been in

England at all, and were all alert to see the country of which they must have heard their parents talk so often. Indeed, we had quite a little nursery-full of children—Mr. and Mrs. Gethin with their two little girls from East London, a lady with two children from Port Elizabeth, two ladies with four children each from Delagoa Bay, and so on. Our small passengers were merry little creatures, and seemed to enjoy the whole novelty of their surroundings in the big ship as much as anybody on board.

CAPTAIN PIERCE.

Undisturbed as we were by any threatening signs in the weather, the usual round of merrymaking kept any day from seeming dreary. Before we reached Las Palmas we had some capital exciting sports which gave infinite pleasure to all of us for two days. They were of the usual kind. The men vied with each other in every sort of race. Very grotesque, for instance—as I think most sports aboard ship necessarily are — was the obstacle race. No less amusing was the sham cockfight on deck; while putting the weight lured out all the strong men on board, notably the jolly tars from the Navy, who entered heart and soul into all this innocent nonsense. There is one great advantage of sports on board ship, and that is the scope they offer feminine competitors, who stand too much on their dignity when on shore. A number of our lady passengers took part in our sports with great enthusiasm. They amused themselves and us all with their potato and egg and spoon races, while the eagerness they displayed in their frantic attempts to be the first in threading a needle was the cause of endless merriment.

That and the like were the most exciting events of the voyage until we were off Cape Verde. Then there sprang up a heavy squall, and great sheets of rain swept the decks. But that was destined to be a very short break in the monotony of favouring winds; for we passed through it in three or four hours. Another variation of a different kind occurred when we bore down on Las Palmas. A number of us went ashore and spent a charming day in this paradise, and when we joined the vessel in the evening we found that we had been recruited by seven new passengers. Among them was the Rev. Mr. Sandbach, a Wesleyan clergyman from Stockport,



THE "DRUMMOND CASTLE."

and his wife. On the following day we encountered a pretty strong head wind, but by morning it had considerably lessened.

Then the fatal Tuesday dawned. During the day a drizzling Scotch mist began to settle down on us, and a thick fog enveloped the vessel. It was a ticklish bit of coast we were off, and at 7.30 p.m. the ship was stopped and soundings were taken. Everything, however, seemed to be right, and we were soon full speed again and in the very best of spirits. For this was to be our last evening but one on board, and we had been such a happy family that, short as was the time we had been together, we were half sad at the prospect of parting and yet glad to think that we were so near home. So merry and light-hearted indeed were we that the concert of the evening was one of the heartiest we had had. Some of the ladies played, and some of the men sang, there was a series of *tableaux vivants*, and the whole thing was pleasantly rounded off when Captain Pierce joined us for five minutes at the end, and made a pleasant little speech in reply to the vote of thanks which had been passed to him for the courtesy he had shown us all. When the last strains of "God Save the Queen," right heartily sung, had died away, and we had mutually congratulated one another on the pleasantness of the evening's entertainment, most of the audience disappeared to make ready for the night. I came on deck with a lady. The night was pitch dark, and after a few strolls round the deck my friend paused at the companion way, and bidding me "Good-night," disappeared below to her cabin.

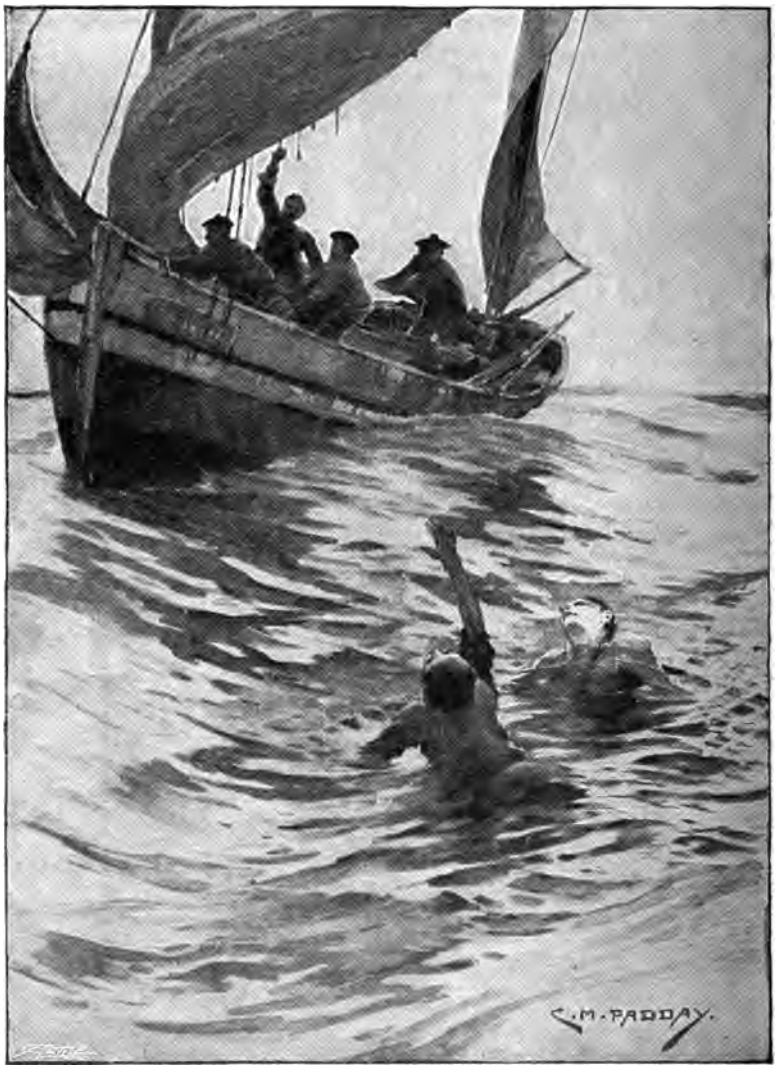
Photo by Treble, Brixton.

MR. CHARLES MARQUARDT.

This was shortly before eleven, and I was in no mood to retire so early. So I sauntered into the smoking-room, which was so near my cabin, to find some five or six men there, including the naval

boatswain of whom I have spoken, Mr. Motyer. When I asked him if he was thinking of settling in for the night he said: "No; whenever there 's a fog on I never go to bed. I stay on deck all night." It was almost a prophetic speech, for no sooner had he made it than we heard a loud grating noise, and the room seemed to tilt up slightly. "That's a collision!" said the boatswain, and we all rushed out, he and I first, because we were nearest the door. We rushed along the deck towards the bow, but in the *intense darkness nothing* was to be seen at all. The engines had ceased their pulsations, while the bell from the bridge down to the engine-room was ringing loudly.

I have no very distinct recollection of the events that were crowded into the next few minutes. I remember observing to the boatswain that the ship's bows were getting very low and near the water, and then I rushed back to my cabin, noting on my way that some sailors were uncovering one of the boats. I managed to get on a light great-coat, anticipating the possibility of having to spend the night in an open boat,



WOOD AND GODBOLT RESCUED BY FRENCH FISHERMEN.

and then I tied the life-belt that hung in my cabin round me. None too soon, for when I came on deck again

Photo by Miller, Yarmouth.

MR. W. J. GODBOLT.

the vessel was heeling forwards at such an angle that it was almost impossible for me to stand upon it. The only person I noticed on board was a fellow-passenger, Mr. Hinds, who asked me if I could lend him a life-belt. I told him he would find one in my cabin, though I can't say whether he got it or not. I know now, however, that his was the first body washed ashore. Then I dashed across the deck, by this time canting up at a frightful angle, and seizing the stanchion supporting the awning, managed to seat myself astride the bulwark. Then, as the bow sank and put out the fires, the electric lights suddenly blinked out, and we were left in utter darkness. Immediately after, I found myself in the water, the ship having slipped off into the water right beneath me; and as it did, the rush of air through the port-holes caused by the inrush of water created a deafening noise. I heard one piercing yell of a woman, and in the darkness I could hear people shouting out to one another in the water. But that soon stopped. Somehow or other, a big spar used to hold the canvas cover across the top of one of the boats, which had been upset just as it was being swung outwards, came my way, and I caught hold of it. I found some eight or nine people clinging to it, but soon there were only three of us—myself, Ellis, the fourth officer, who had been a great deal on the bridge that day, and a man whom I did not know, but who was, I think, a passenger. He was the first to drop off. Then Ellis and I managed to rig up a sort of triangular raft, and on it we floated about for a long time, immersed in water up to our necks.

At last Ellis got too exhausted to hold on any longer, and he slipped off, leaving me the solitary voyager on the raft, with endless corpses, as it seemed, constantly turning up around me, and here and there a floating crate or bit of wreckage, for, though I was so long in the water, I was really floating about in a very limited area after all, driven in by one current, drifted outwards by another. Then my crazy raft broke up, and I was left with the spar. Thus I floated about for hours, until I sighted a fishing-cobble, and I was picked up, half dazed, by the kindly old fisherman Berthelet, whom I shall never forget. He rowed me to his island home, Ushant, two miles off, and tended me with the utmost kindness. Though I had been twelve hours in the water and was half-numbed, the attention which I received very soon pulled me together, little the worse for my night's outing.

When I woke two hours later the ghastliness of the tragedy dawned upon me, as I heard that bodies were being washed up constantly on the neighbouring islands, also on the mainland, and Molène. At the last-named the only two survivors besides myself—Quartermaster Wood and Seaman Godbolt—had been rescued by some of the gallant fishermen who ply

Photo by Curtis, Albany Road, S.E.

QUARTERMASTER WOOD.

their precarious calling on that unforgettable coast.

The scenes during the next few days were harrowing beyond measure, bodies

being washed up on the islands of Molène, Ushant, and at Le Conquêt. I shall never forget the Saturday (June 20) when a number of bodies were buried on Ushant. All the inhabitants—there are only some two thousand of them—came out dressed in the quaint costumes which make the Bretons so picturesque. The bodies had been laid in the old life-boat station, but were taken thence to the church for the funeral service. The Abbé and three priests performed the rites of burial after the manner of their Church. The body of poor Ellis was borne on the shoulders of the fishermen, and we three survivors, who alone were left to tell the tale, walked behind it to its last resting-place. One white pall, that of a lady passenger, was carried by twelve girls in native costume, while the body of a little girl was borne by a woman. It was a melancholy and impressive sight, which all who saw will never forget. After the service I left the island which had sheltered me. Berthelet, who knew a little English, accompanied me to the steamer which was to take me to Brest, where everybody was anxious to hear some account of the disaster and of the victims. Several English people had hurried to the old town to glean some particulars, scanty enough as they were, of the friends and loved ones who had gone down with the ill-fated vessel.

Photo by W. D. Dighton, Cardiff.

THE LATE MRS. GETHIN AND HER CHILDREN.

It was, indeed, little enough one could

tell them of the disaster itself; still less of the individual victims they inquired after so pitifully. And the pain of it all was only increased when I landed in London two days later, because the inquiries were increased tenfold; and still there was no more to tell. Wives and sisters, mothers and lovers, besieged the office of Messrs. Currie, wild-eyed with grief, longing for some scrap of information which would throw any light whatever on the passengers or the crew of the lost liner. It was difficult, indeed, to convince some of them that the castastrophe had fallen, that the end had come. How many photographs I have had submitted to me, to see if I could identify them with some of my unhappy fellow-passengers!—for many a young Englishman has disappeared from view in South Africa, and his relatives at home are terrified lest he should be lying stark and dead off Ushant. So much there is to the anxious hearts at home in the slightest similarity of name.

The hopelessness of it all has impressed me as strongly as anything that has occurred as I have sat in the prosaic shipping office in busy Fenchurch Street day after day, and been eagerly visited by saddened, inconsolable crowds of mourners, who are waiting, waiting for those who will never return.

And that is all the story of the great lost liner.

Charles Marquardt

A LYRIC OF JAPAN.

My Love is an almond-eyed girl;
  Her face is as round as the moon;
In her hair there is never a curl;
  And her smile is the sunshine of noon.

Her name is Li-kinta-Sim-poo,
  She dwelleth in Tokio's town,
And peacocks in silver and blue
  Emblazon the folds of her gown.

We sat by the river one day,
  She twanging a sounding guitar,
And watching the smoke curl away
  From the end of my fragrant cigar.

When shyly I asked her to wed
  While the summer still reigned in the land,
She replied with a nod of the head
  Which no one could misunderstand.

WILFRID WILSON GIBSON.

GREAT MEN IN LITTLE WORLDS.

By GEORGE GISSING.

IV.—THE PRIZE LODGER.

THE ordinary West-End Londoner—who is a citizen of no city at all, but dwells amid a mere conglomerate of houses at a certain distance from Charing Cross—has known a fleeting surprise when, by rare chance, his eye fell upon the advertisement of some such newspaper as the *Battersea Times*, the *Camberwell Mercury*, or the *Islington Gazette*. To him, these and the like districts are nothing more than compass points of the huge metropolis. He may be in practice acquainted with them; if historically inclined, he may think of them as old-time villages swallowed up by insatiable London; but he has never grasped the fact that in Battersea, Camberwell, Islington, there are people living who name these places as their home; who are born, subsist, and die there as though in a distinct town, and practically without consciousness of its obliteration in the map of a world capital.

This stable element of the population consists of more or less old-fashioned people. Round about them is the ceaseless coming and going of nomads who keep abreast with the time, who take their lodgings by the week, their houses by the month; who camp indifferently in regions old and new, learning their geography in train and tram-car. Abiding parishioners are wont to be either very poor or established in a moderate prosperity; they lack enterprise, either for good or ill: if comfortably off, they owe it, as a rule, to some predecessor's exertion. And for the most part, though little enough endowed with the civic spirit, they abundantly pride themselves on their local permanence.

Representative of this class was Mr. Archibald Jordan, a native of Islington, and, at the age of five and forty, still faithful to the streets which he had trodden as a child. His father started a small grocery business in Upper Street; Archibald succeeded to the shop, advanced soberly, and at length admitted a partner, by whose capital and energy the business was much increased. After his thirtieth year Mr. Jordan ceased to stand behind the counter. Of no very active disposition, and but moderately set on gain, he found it pleasant to spend a few hours daily over the books and the correspondence, and for the rest of his time to enjoy a gossipy leisure, straying among the acquaintances of a lifetime, or making new in the decorous bar-parlours, billiard-rooms, and other such retreats which allured his bachelor liberty. His dress and bearing were unpretentious, but impressively respectable; he never allowed his garments (made by an Islington tailor, an old schoolfellow) to exhibit the least sign of wear, but fashion affected their style as little as possible. Of middle height, and tending to portliness, he walked at an unvarying pace, as a man who had never known undignified hurry; in his familiar thoroughfares he glanced about him with a good-humoured air of proprietorship, or with a look of thoughtful criticism for any changes that might be going forward. No one had ever spoken flatteringly of his visage; he knew himself a very homely-featured man, and accepted the fact, as something that had neither favoured nor hindered him in life. But it was his conviction that no man's eye had a greater power of solemn and overwhelming rebuke, and this gift he took a pleasure in exercising, however trivial the occasion.

For five-and-twenty years he had lived in lodgings; always within the narrow range of Islington respectability, yet never for more than a twelvemonth under the same roof. This peculiar feature of Mr. Jordan's life had made him a subject of continual interest to local landladies, among whom were several life-long residents, on friendly terms of old time with the Jordan family. To them it seemed an astonishing thing that a man in such circumstances had not yet married;

granting this eccentricity, they could not imagine what made him change his abode so often. Not a landlady in Islington but would welcome Mr. Jordan to her rooms, and, having got him, do her utmost to prolong the connection. He had been known to quit a house on the paltriest excuse, removing to another in which he could not expect equally good treatment. There was no accounting for it; it must be taken as an ultimate mystery of life, and made the most of as a perennial topic of neighbourly conversation.

As to the desirability of having Mr. Jordan for a lodger there could be no difference of opinion among rational womankind. Mrs. Wiggins, indeed, had taken his sudden departure from her house so ill that she always spoke of him abusively; but who heeded Mrs. Wiggins? Even in the sadness of hope deferred, those ladies who had entertained him once, and speculated on his possible return, declared Mr. Jordan a "thorough gentleman." Lodgers, as a class, do not recommend themselves in Islington; Mr. Jordan shone against the dusky background with almost dazzling splendour. To speak of lodgers as of cattle, he was a prize creature. A certain degree of comfort he firmly exacted; he might be a trifle fastidious about cooking; he stood upon his dignity; but no one could say that he grudged reward for service rendered. It was his practice to pay more than the landlady asked. "Twenty-five shillings a week, you say? I shall give you twenty-eight. *But*——" and with raised forefinger he went through the catalogue of his demands. Everything must be done precisely as he directed; even in the laying of his table he insisted upon certain minute peculiarities, and to forget one of them was to earn that gaze of awful reprimand which Mr. Jordan found (or thought) more efficacious than any spoken word. Against this precision might be set his strange indulgence in the matter of bills; he merely regarded the total, was never known to dispute an item. Only twice in his long experience had he quitted a lodging because of exorbitant charges, and on these occasions he sternly refused to discuss the matter. "Mrs. Hawker, I am paying your account with the addition of one week's rent. Your rooms will be vacant at eleven o'clock to-morrow morning." And until the hour of departure no entreaty, no prostration could induce him to utter a syllable.

It was on the first of June, 1889, his forty-fifth birthday, that Mr. Jordan removed from quarters he had occupied for ten months, and became a lodger in the house of Mrs. Elderfield.

Mrs. Elderfield, a widow, aged three-and-thirty, with one little girl, was but a casual resident in Islington; she knew nothing of Mr. Jordan, and made no inquiries about him. Strongly impressed, as every woman must needs be, by his air and tone of mild authority, she congratulated herself on the arrival of such an inmate; but no subservience appeared in her demeanour; she behaved with studious civility, nothing more. Her words were few and well chosen. Always neatly dressed, yet always busy, she moved about the house with quick, silent step, and cleanliness marked her path. The meals were well cooked, well served. Mr. Jordan being her only lodger, she could devote to him an undivided attention. At the end of his first week the critical gentleman felt greater satisfaction than he had ever known.

The bill lay upon his table at breakfast-time. He perused the items, and, much against his habit, reflected upon them. Having breakfasted, he rang the bell.

"Mrs. Elderfield——"

He paused, and looked gravely at the widow. She had a plain, honest, healthy face, with resolute lips, and an eye that brightened when she spoke; her well-knit figure, motionless in its respectful attitude, declared a thoroughly sound condition of the nerves.

"Mrs. Elderfield, your bill is so very moderate that I think you must have forgotten something."

"Have you looked it over, Sir?"

"I never trouble about the details. Please examine it."

"There is no need, Sir. I never make a mistake."

"I said, Mrs. Elderfield, please *examine* it."

She seemed to hesitate, but obeyed.

"The bill is quite correct, Sir."

"Thank you."

He paid it at once and said no more.

The weeks went on. To Mr. Jordan's surprise, his landlady's zeal and efficiency showed no diminution, a thing unprecedented in his long and varied experience. After the first day or two he had found nothing to correct; every smallest instruction was faithfully carried out. Moreover, he knew for the first time in his life the comfort of absolutely clean rooms. The best of his landladies hitherto had not risen above that conception of

domestic purity which is relative to London soot and fog. His palate, too, was receiving an education. Probably he had never eaten of a joint rightly cooked, or tasted a potato boiled as it should be; more often than not, the food set before him had undergone a process which left it masticable indeed, but void of savour and nourishment. Many little attentions of which he had never dreamed kept him in a wondering cheerfulness. And at length he said to himself: "Here I shall stay."

Not that his constant removals had been solely due to discomfort and a hope of better things. The secret—perhaps not entirely revealed even to himself—lay in Mr. Jordan's sense of his own importance, and his uneasiness whenever he felt that, in the eyes of a landlady, he was becoming a mere everyday person—an ordinary lodger. No sooner did he detect a sign of this than he made up his mind to move. It gave him the keenest pleasure of which he was capable when, on abruptly announcing his immediate departure, he perceived the landlady's profound mortification. To make the blow heavier he had even resorted to artifice, seeming to express a most lively contentment during the very days when he had decided to leave and was asking himself where he should next abide. One of his delights was to return to a house which he had quitted years ago, to behold the excitement and bustle occasioned by his appearance, and play the good-natured autocrat over grovelling dependents. In every case, save the two already mentioned, he had parted with his landlady on terms of friendliness, never vouchsafing a reason for his going away, genially illuding every attempt to obtain an explanation, and at the last abounding in graceful recognition of all that had been done for him. Mr. Jordan shrank from dispute, hated every sort of contention; this characteristic gave a certain refinement to his otherwise commonplace existence. Vulgar vanity would have displayed itself in precisely the acts and words from which his self-esteem nervously shrank. And of late he had been thinking over the list of his landladies, with a half-formed desire to settle down, to make himself a permanent home. Doubtless as a result of this state of mind, he betook himself to a strange house, where, as from neutral ground, he might reflect upon the lodgings he knew, and judge between their merits. He could not foresee what awaited him under Mrs. Elderfield's roof; the event impressed *him as providential;* he felt, with singular emotion, that choice was taken out of his hands. Lodgings could not be more than perfect, and such he had found.

It was not his habit to chat with landladies. At times he held forth to them on some topic of interest, suavely, instructively; if he gave in to their ordinary talk, it was with a half-absent smile of condescension. Mrs. Elderfield seeming as little disposed to gossip as himself, a month elapsed before he knew anything of her history; but one evening the reserve on both sides was broken. His landlady modestly inquired whether she was giving satisfaction, and Mr. Jordan replied with altogether unwonted fervour. In the dialogue that ensued, they exchanged personal information. The widow had lost her husband four years ago; she came from the Midlands, but had long dwelt in London. Then fell from her lips a casual remark which made the hearer uneasy.

"I don't think I shall always stay here. The neighbourhood is too crowded. I should like to have a house somewhere further out."

Mr. Jordan did not comment on this, but it kept a place in his daily thoughts, and became at length so much of an anxiety that he invited a renewal of the subject.

"You have no intention of moving just yet, Mrs. Elderfield?"

"I was going to tell you, Sir," replied the landlady, with her respectful calm, "that I have decided to make a change next spring. Some friends of mine have gone to live at Wood Green, and I shall look for a house in the same neighbourhood."

Mr. Jordan was, in private, gravely disturbed. He who had flitted from house to house for many years, distressing the souls of landladies, now lamented the prospect of a forced removal. It was open to him to accompany Mrs. Elderfield, but he shrank from the thought of living in so remote a district. Wood Green! The very name appalled him, for he had never been able to endure the country. He betook himself one dreary autumn afternoon to that northern suburb, and what he saw did not at all reassure him. On his way back he began once more to review the list of old lodgings.

But from that day his conversations with Mrs. Elderfield grew more frequent, more intimate. In the evening he occasionally made an excuse for knocking at her parlour door, and lingered for a talk which ended only at supper-time. He spoke of his own affairs, and grew more

ready to do so as his hearer manifested a genuine interest, without impertinent curiosity. Little by little he imparted to Mrs. Elderfield a complete knowledge of his commercial history, of his pecuniary standing—matters of which he had never before spoken to a mere acquaintance. A change was coming over him; the foundations of habit crumbled beneath his feet; he lost his look of complacence, his self-confident and superior tone. Bar-parlours and billiard-rooms saw him but rarely and flittingly. He seemed to have lost his pleasure in the streets of Islington, and spent all his spare time by the fireside, perpetually musing.

On a day in March one of his old landladies, Mrs. Higdon, sped to the house of another, Mrs. Evans, panting under a burden of strange news. Could it be believed! Mr. Jordan was going to marry—to marry that woman in whose house he was living! Mrs. Higdon had it on the very best authority, that of Mr. Jordan's partner, who spoke of the affair without reserve. A new house had already been taken—at Wood Green. Well! After all these years, after so many excellent opportunities, to marry a mere stranger and forsake Islington! In a moment Mr. Jordan's character was gone; had he figured in the police-court under some disgraceful charge these landladies could hardly have felt more shocked and professed themselves more disgusted. The intelligence spread. Women went out of their way to have a sight of Mrs. Elderfield's house; they hung about for a glimpse of that sinister person herself. She had robbed them, every one, of a possible share in Islington's prize lodger. Had it been one of themselves they could have borne the chagrin; but a woman whom not one of them knew, an alien! What base arts had she practised? Ah, it was better not to inquire too closely into the secrets of that lodging-house!

IN A MOMENT MR. JORDAN'S CHARACTER WAS GONE.

Though every effort was made to learn the time and place of the ceremony, Mr. Jordan's landladies had the mortification to hear of his wedding only when it was over. Of course, this showed that he felt the disgracefulness of his behaviour; he was not utterly lost to shame. It could only be hoped that he would not know the bitterness of repentance.

Not till he found himself actually living in the house at Wood Green did Mr. Jordan realise how little his own will had had to do with the recent course of events.

Certainly, he had made love to the widow, and had asked her to marry him; but from that point onward he seemed to have put himself entirely in Mrs. Elderfield's hands, granting every request, meeting half-way every suggestion she offered, becoming, in short, quite a different kind of man from his former self. He had not been sensible of a moment's reluctance; he enjoyed the novel sense of yielding himself to affectionate guidance. His wits had gone wool-gathering; they returned to him only after the short honeymoon at Brighton, when he stood upon his own hearth-rug, and looked round at the new furniture and ornaments which symbolised a new beginning of life.

The admirable landlady had shown herself energetic, clear-headed, and full of resource; it was she who chose the house, and transacted all the business in connection with it; Mr. Jordan had merely run about in her company from place to place, smiling approval and signing cheques. No one could have gone to work more prudently, or obtained what she wanted at smaller outlay; for all that, Mr. Jordan, having recovered something like his normal frame of mind, viewed the results with consternation. Left to himself, he would have taken a very small house, and furnished it much in the style of Islington lodgings; as it was, he occupied a ten-roomed "villa," with appointments which seemed to him luxurious, aristocratic. True, the expenditure was of no moment to a man in his position, and there was no fear that Mrs. Jordan would involve him in dangerous extravagance; but he had always lived with such excessive economy that the sudden change to a life correspondent with his income could not but make him uncomfortable.

Mrs. Jordan had, of course, seen to it that her personal appearance harmonised with the new surroundings. She dressed herself and her young daughter with careful appropriateness. There was no display, no purchase of gewgaws—merely garments of good quality, such as became people in easy circumstances. She impressed upon her husband that this was nothing more than a return to the habits of her earlier life. Her first marriage had been a sad mistake; it had brought her down in the world. Now she felt restored to her natural position.

After a week of restlessness, Mr. Jordan resumed his daily visits to the shop in Upper Street, where he sat as usual among the books and the correspondence, and tried to assure himself that all would henceforth be well with him. No more changing from house to house; a really comfortable home in which to spend the rest of his days; a kind and most capable wife to look after all his needs, to humour all his little habits. He could not have taken a wiser step.

For all that, he had lost something, though he did not yet understand what it was. The first perception of a change not for the better flashed upon him one evening in the second week, when he came home an hour later than his wont. Mrs. Jordan, who always stood waiting for him at the window, had no smile as he entered.

"Why are you late?" she asked, in her clear, restrained voice.

"Oh—something or other kept me."

This would not do. Mrs. Jordan quietly insisted on a full explanation of the delay, and it seemed to her unsatisfactory.

"I hope you won't be irregular in your habits, Archibald," said his wife, with gentle admonition. "What I always liked in you was your methodical way of living. I shall be very uncomfortable if I never know when to expect you."

"Yes, my dear, but—business, you see——"

"But you have explained that you *could* have been back at the usual time."

"Yes—that's true—but——"

"Well, well, you won't let it happen again. Oh, really, Archibald!" she suddenly exclaimed. "The idea of you coming into the room with muddy boots! Why, look! There's a patch of mud on the carpet——"

"It was my hurry to speak to you," murmured Mr. Jordan, in confusion.

"Please go at once and take your boots off. And you left your slippers in the bed-room this morning. You must always bring them down, and put them in the dining-room cupboard; then they're ready for you when you come into the house."

Mr. Jordan had but a moderate appetite for his dinner, and he did not talk so pleasantly as usual. This was but the beginning of troubles such as he had not for a moment foreseen. His wife, having since their engagement taken the upper hand, began to show her determination to keep it, and day by day her rule grew more galling to the ex-bachelor. He himself, in the old days, had plagued his landladies by insisting upon method and routine, by his faddish attention to domestic minutiæ; he now learnt what it was to be subjected to the same kind of despotism, exercised with much more exasperating

persistence. Whereas Mrs. Elderfield had scrupulously obeyed every direction given by her lodger, Mrs. Jordan was evidently resolved that her husband should live, move, and have his being in the strictest accordance with her own ideal. Not in any spirit of nagging, or ill-tempered unreasonableness; it was merely that she had her favourite way of doing every conceivable thing, and felt so sure it was the best of all possible ways that she could not endure any other. The first serious disagreement between them had reference to conduct at the breakfast-table. After a broken night, feeling headachy and worried, Mr. Jordan took up his newspaper, folded it conveniently, and set it against the bread so that he could read while eating. Without a word, his wife gently removed it, and laid it aside on a chair.

"What are you doing?" he asked gruffly.

"You mustn't read at meals, Archibald. It's bad manners, and bad for your digestion."

"I've read the news at breakfast all my life, and I shall do so still," exclaimed the husband, starting up and recovering his paper.

"Then you will have breakfast by yourself. Amy, we must go into the other room till papa has finished."

Mr. Jordan ate mechanically, and stared at the newspaper with just as little consciousness. Prompted by the underlying weakness of his character to yield for the sake of peace, wrath made him dogged, and the more steadily he regarded his position, the more was he appalled by the outlook. Why, this meant downright slavery! He had married a woman so horribly like himself in several points that his only hope lay in overcoming her by sheer violence. A thoroughly good and well-meaning woman, an excellent housekeeper, the kind of wife to do him credit and improve his social position; but self-willed, pertinacious, and probably thinking herself his superior in every respect. He had nothing to fear but subjection—the one thing he had never anticipated, the one thing he could never endure.

He went off to business without seeing his wife again, and passed a lamentable day. At his ordinary hour of return, instead of setting off homeward, he strayed about the by-streets of Islington and Pentonville. Not till this moment had he felt how dear they were to him, the familiar streets; their very odours fell sweet upon his nostrils. Never again could he go hither and thither, among the old friends, the old places, to his heart's content. What had possessed him to abandon this precious liberty! The thought of Wood Green revolted him; live there as long as he might, he would never be at home. He thought of his wife (now waiting for him) with fear, and then with a reaction of rage. Let her wait! He—Archibald Jordan—before whom women had bowed and trembled for five-and-twenty years—was *he* to come and go at a wife's bidding! And at length the thought seemed so utterly preposterous that he sped northward as fast as possible, determined to right himself this very evening.

Mrs. Jordan sat alone. He marched into the room with muddy boots, flung his hat and overcoat into a chair, and poked the fire violently. His wife's eye was fixed on him, and she first spoke—in the quiet voice that he dreaded.

"What do you mean by carrying on like this, Archibald?"

"I shall carry on as I like in my own house—hear that?"

"I do hear it, and I'm very sorry to. It gives me a very bad opinion of you. You will *not* do as you like in your own house. Rage as you please. You will *not* do as you like in your own house."

There was a contemptuous anger in her eye which the man could not face. He lost all control of himself, uttered coarse oaths, and stood quivering. Then the woman began to lecture him; she talked steadily, acrimoniously, for more than an hour, regardless of his interruptions. Nervously exhausted, he fled at length from the room. A couple of hours later they met again in the nuptial chamber, and again Mrs. Jordan began to talk. Her point, as before, was that he had begun married life about as badly as possible. Why had he married her at all? What fault had she committed to incur such outrageous usage? But, thank goodness, she had a will of her own, and a proper self-respect; behave as he might, *she* would still persevere in the path of womanly duty. If he thought to make her life unbearable he would find his mistake; she simply should not heed him; perhaps he would return to his senses before long—and this vein Mrs. Jordan continued until night was at odds with morning, only becoming silent when her partner had sunk into the oblivion of uttermost fatigue.

The next day Mr. Jordan's demeanour showed him, for the moment at all events, defeated. He made no attempt to read

at breakfast; he moved about very quietly. And in the afternoon he came home at the regulation hour.

Mrs. Jordan had friends in the neighbourhood, but she saw little of them. She was not a woman of ordinary tastes. Everything proved that, to her mind, the possession of a nice house, with the prospects of a comfortable life, was an end in itself; she had no desire to exhibit her well-furnished rooms, or to gad about talking of her advantages. Every moment of her day was taken up in the superintendence of servants, the discharge of an infinitude of housewifely tasks. She had no assistance from her daughter; the

"I HATE THE SIGHT OF YOU!"

girl went to school, and was encouraged to study with the utmost application. The husband's presence in the house seemed a mere accident—save in the still nocturnal season, when Mrs. Jordan bestowed upon him her counsel and her admonitions.

After the lapse of a few days Mr. Jordan again offered combat, and threw himself into it with a frenzy.

"Look here!" he shouted at length, "either you or I are going to leave this house. I can't live with you—understand? I hate the sight of you!"

"Go on!" retorted the other, with mild bitterness. "Abuse me as much as you like, I can bear it. I shall continue to do my duty, and unless you have recourse to personal violence, here I remain. If you go too far, of course the law must defend me!"

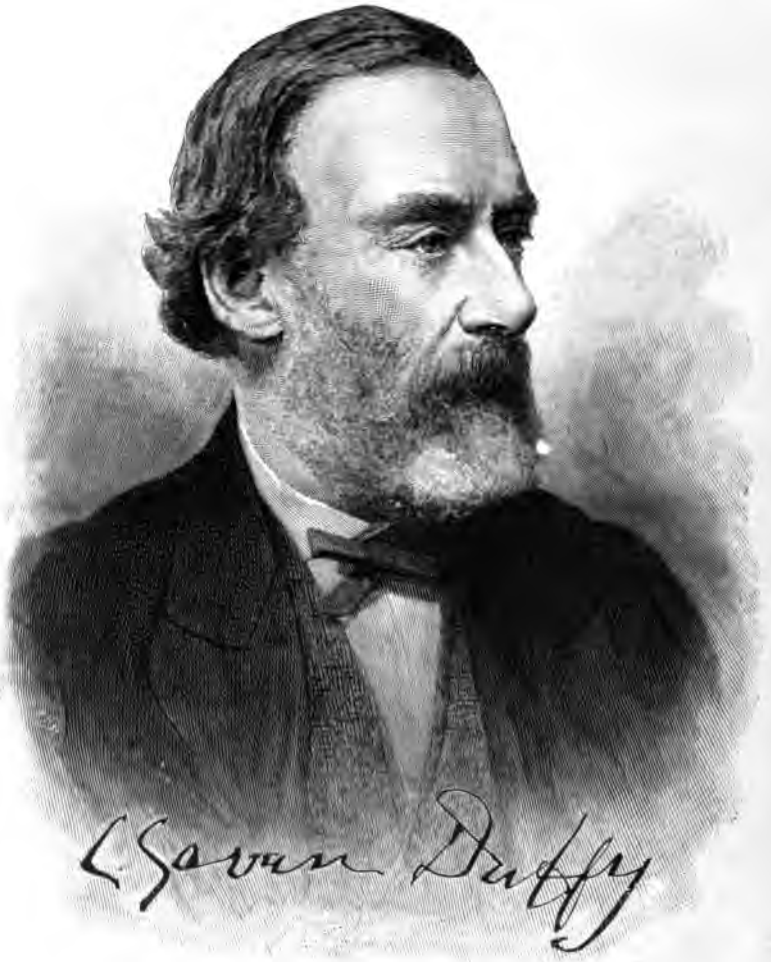
This was precisely what Mr. Jordan knew and dreaded; the law was on his wife's side, and by applying at a police-court for protection she could overwhelm him with shame and ridicule, which would make life intolerable. Impossible to argue with this woman. Say what he might, the fault always seemed his. His wife was simply doing her duty—in a spirit of admirable thoroughness; he, in the eyes of a third person, would appear an unreasonable and violent curmudgeon. Had it not all sprung out of his obstinacy with regard to reading at breakfast? How explain to anyone what he suffered in his nerves, in his pride, in the outraged habitudes of a lifetime?

That evening he did not return to Wood Green. Afraid of questions if he showed himself in the old resorts, he spent some hours in a billiard-room near King's Cross, and towards midnight took a bedroom under the same roof. On going to business next day, he awaited with tremors either a telegram or a visit from his wife; but the whole day passed, and he heard nothing. After dark he walked once more about the beloved streets, pausing now and then to look up at the windows of this or that well-remembered house. Ah, if he durst but enter and engage a lodging! Impossible—for ever impossible!

He slept in the same place as on the night before. And again a day passed without any sort of inquiry from Wood Green. When evening came he went home.

Mrs. Jordan behaved as though he had returned from business in the usual way. "Is it raining?" she asked, with a half smile. And her husband replied, in as matter-of-fact a tone as he could command, "No, it isn't." There was no mention between them of his absence. That night Mrs. Jordan talked for an hour or two of his bad habit of stepping on the paint when he went up and down stairs, then fell calmly asleep.

But Mr. Jordan did not sleep for a long time. What! was he, after all, to be allowed his liberty *out* of doors, provided he relinquished it within? Was it really the case that his wife, satisfied with her house and furniture and income, did not care a jot whether he stayed away or came home? There, indeed, gleamed a hope. When Mr. Jordan slept, he dreamed that he was back again in lodgings at Islington, tasting an extraordinary bliss. Day dissipated the vision, but still Mrs. Jordan spoke not a word of his absence, and with trembling still he hoped.


C. Gavan Duffy

A FAMOUS IRISH STATESMAN.

By J. HENNIKER-HEATON, M.P.

THERE is a rare kind of greatness which belongs to age and wisdom and a pre-eminently noble life—so rare that usually in a generation but one man out of an entire people attains it. The hero's views may not be universally accepted; some of his achievements may have been widely denounced. But on the whole his countrymen instinctively recognise in him the noblest example of the national character, the high-water mark of racial excellence and virtue. Thus we have seen Bismarck venerated in Germany; Thiers and then de Lesseps in France; Wendell Holmes in America; Crispi in Italy; Gladstone in England. And thus we find every Irishman—scholar, trader or peasant, Catholic or Protestant, Orangeman or Home Ruler—softening as he pronounces, with affectionate pride, the name of Charles Gavan Duffy.

It would be a mistake, however, to regard this distinguished man as a great Irishman and nothing more. His career belongs to the Empire; to every subject of the Queen who speaks English, or admires eloquence, or appreciates courage, energy, statesmanship, and patriotism. From this point of view his history is a dramatic one. He combines the characters of poet, historian, patriot, convict, senator, and Prime Minister. Did ever man fulfil so many rôles, and so various, before? What if—as some of us will—we question whether his restless doings in Ireland brought real benefit to his country? We forgive much to a poet whose verses have run through forty editions, and are thumbed and spelled out in every cabin of his native land. As Englishmen, we may believe that he did wrong to work for a severance of the Union. But as Englishmen we are grateful that he laid the foundation of Australasian unity, and thus gave tangible shape to the vague conception of Imperial Federation. Only in the British Empire can these mighty masterspirits find full scope. An unsuccessful agitator in Russia or France or Germany has but one resource—a garret in Leicester Square. The British agitator has the choice of a dozen great colonies in which he may find a new home and abundant opportunities for the exercise of his talents.

The life of Sir Charles Gavan Duffy is full of interest. From the very first down to this day he has been a hard worker, and a believer in the maxim that "if you want a thing done well, you must do it yourself." He has always aimed at mastering facts as well as men, and much of his Parliamentary success is attributable to his thorough knowledge of the subjects under discussion, however recondite. Born in Monaghan, Ireland, on April 12, 1816, he early showed the tendency to rule which is innate in the destined leader of men. Not content with organising a boys' regiment and drilling them in the most approved martinet style, he was ambitious of controlling their minds too; and so he established a debating club or parliament in his native town, in which he wielded a domination absolute as that of Pitt in his haughtiest prime. School-days fled all too soon, and we next see Duffy, an enthusiastic, ambitious lad of twenty, in a prosaic newspaper office, penning philippics against harsh agents, and ranging through the full gamut of passion in the discussion of town council politics. While thus employed he formed his memorable friendships with Thomas Davis (whose life he published) and John Blake Dillon, father of the Anti-Parnellite leader. These three established the *Nation*, which, whatever be thought of its political aims, certainly inculcated in the breasts of Irishmen the noblest lessons of morality, self-mastery, and virtue. It is the fashion to claim every distinguished Nationalist of recent times as a disciple of the brilliant trio. But it would be difficult to justify, from the lofty teaching of the *Nation*, such sinister doctrines as "the policy of exasperation" denounced by brave old Isaac Butt, the "boycotting" of political opponents, or the acceptance of aid from advocates of outrage and murder. The

Nation was unquestionably the ablest newspaper ever printed in Ireland. It had a remarkable effect in rousing patriotic feelings among the educated as well as among the poor, and even interested hard men like Carlyle. Its prose and poetry attracted attention among literary men as well as politicians. The one point on which all critics agreed was the beauty of the verse printed from week to week in the *Nation*, in which the fire and grace and tenderness of Moore were revived for a race that has always loved poetry.

There is no surer proof of ability than the successful launching of a great newspaper. In this matter-of-fact country the editor who relied on odes and sonnets to any extent would soon find himself without readers. But to the impressionable, sensitive Celtic mind the melody and intensity of verse are irresistible. One of Duffy's happiest inspirations was the preparation of a collection of ballads for his "Irish History" series—a collection which has, as already mentioned, run to a forty-second edition.

Young Duffy was, of course, specially obnoxious to the Castle; and in 1844, when twenty-eight years old, he was convicted, with O'Connell and others, of conspiracy to overthrow British authority. One or two old lawyers still remember the quashing of this conviction in the House of Lords. In 1848 Duffy, Martin, Smith O'Brien, and John Mitchell were arraigned for the brand-new offence of treason-felony. Four times they stood in the dock; four times an Irish jury refused to convict. Once the jury had been so carefully "packed" by the Crown that the prosecution felt sure of success. How and why it failed is a delightful story, racy of the soil, which may one day be told. The worst use to put an Irish leader to is to prosecute him. Persecuted by authority, Duffy became the most popular and powerful of Irish statesmen; and he had no difficulty, aided by his "Tenant League," in getting returned to Parliament a body of fifty members, including himself. An Irish party can never hold together for any length of time; and before long, jealousy, insubordination, even treason, had done their work. Duffy was not the first or last great Irish Parliamentarian, but he recognised sooner than any the utter hopelessness of attempting to coerce or weary the House of Commons into concessions, or of keeping together as a disciplined force a number of ambitious spirits, each of whom thought himself best qualified to lead. Disgusted with the treachery of friends, and perceiving that nothing good could come of further struggles at Westminster, Duffy, who had been called to the Bar, resolved to leave the life of unsuccessful patriot behind him, and try his fortune as an advocate in Australia.

Here begins, in 1855, the second chapter of a remarkable life, as the baffled champion, with a brow beginning to show furrows, steps on board of the ship that is to bear him, with wife and children, far from the familiar scenes and struggles of twenty years. He could not, however, leave fame behind him. On landing at Melbourne he found himself a power in the State before he had opened his mouth. Victoria was electing her first Legislative Assembly, and thousands who had learned to admire him at a distance for his fighting qualities and stainless character, were resolved that he should have a seat. A property qualification existed; £5000 was subscribed at the shortest notice for the necessary freehold, and he was elected. In a few months his abilities, experience, and influence carried him into the Cabinet. In 1859 he became Minister of Public Lands, and set about his great work of settling the people on the soil. Through formidable opposition, and in the teeth of the wealthy "squatter" interest, he carried his policy to success, and over vast regions, "waving with golden grain," which he rescued from the all-devouring stockowner, his name is worshipped to this day. In the course of an election speech he once said: "I travelled from Briagoling to Maffia, and thence to Cowwar, a district justly called the granary of the east. I afterwards visited Bruther and Lindenon's Flat, at the other end of the electorate, and in all these places I had the inexpressible pleasure of being assured by legions of prosperous farmers who possessed the soil that they obtained their homesteads under what has been named the Duffy Land Act. All the unaccustomed toil of a long journey was repaid by the picture I had imagined long ago realised under my eyes—the picture of happy homes possessed by a free, manly, yeoman proprietary."

This is the "picture," the paradise, which has haunted the thoughts of Irish patriots for generations, but Duffy alone has been permitted to see it realised, and then not on Irish soil. An Englishman, with inherited tastes for trade, and a wide range of comfort and enjoyment, can be supremely happy in a town, in a shop, or

counting-house, or Government office. To the Irishman, the most blessed earthly vision is a landscape dotted with cottages, each wreathing column of turf-smoke denoting a free tiller of the soil, surrounded by a group of sturdy sons and daughters in homespun, with no rent to pay, and fearing no man's frown.

To Duffy, even more than to the late Sir Henry Parkes, the movement for Australasian Federal Union owes its inception. He first perceived the inconveniences and dangers of isolation for the various settlements; and set himself to devise a scheme under which, while local liberties were preserved, the common safety and advantage were provided for. At this stage of our history it is of less importance to increase the Empire than to consolidate it; and this splendid achievement of his riper years has, we repeat, utterly effaced for Englishmen all memory of the errors of a generous youth.

He became as completely Australian in taste, policy, and aspirations as he had been Irish. Or, rather, the Australian blended with the Irish character, as one tint transforms another on the painter's canvas. He became practical, prudent; satisfied to reap such harvest as lay ready for the sickle. For many years he promoted every good work in Melbourne, and popular respect increased for his sagacity and loftiness of aim. As one of his friends said the other day of him, "We do not say that his views were always right, but they were always upright." In 1871 he became—he who had stood in a Dublin dock—Premier of Victoria. In 1873 he was knighted. In 1877 he was elected Speaker; and not long afterwards the Sovereign decorated with the Star of St. Michael and St. George a breast once suspected, now known to shelter as true and loyal a heart as ever beat.

There remains the third — is it the final?—phase of this fascinating existence. Twenty years of Irish politics, followed by twenty years of Australian politics, were hardly an ideal preparation for the tranquil labours of a man of letters. Yet, in his old age, tearing up once more the clustered rootlets of habit, association, and friendship, Sir Charles emigrated once more, this time to the emerald slopes washed by the Mediterranean and bathed in the unclouded light of a Southern sky. Here, in a little villa in Nice, he has produced book after book, each more entrancing than the last. "Young Ireland," "Four Years of Irish History," "The League of North and South," "The Life of Thomas Davis," and "Conversations and Correspondence with Carlyle," are shortly to be followed by "My Life in Two Hemispheres," which is regarded by the veteran writer as his chief work. The *succès de curiosité* attendant on any book by an eminent man of action may partially account for the favour shown to the first named. But a similar explanation will not suffice for the fact that one and all of the series have been equally successful. Disraeli had a theory that a man of genius could shine in any pursuit. A true diamond is radiant wherever a facet is cut upon its surface. Sir Charles stands in the first rank as a prose-writer. With a free, graceful, accurate style, earnest and lively by turns, lit up by flashes of rare wit, marked by sustained exaltation of sentiment and consummate knowledge of detail, enjoying the light of long experience and familiarity with power, having tested theories of all kinds, and learned to proportion the object to the means; above all, looking back on pictures saddened and harmonised by the mellow haze of Time, he is almost an ideal historian.

A few weeks ago the old gentleman's friends assembled to congratulate him on his attaining the age of eighty. Many graceful things were said; many beautiful bouquets were laid on his table. He was moved to declare his thankfulness for the happiness of his declining days, for home, for friends, for health, for fair surroundings; and quaintly added that among other blessings was that of being able to walk the streets unknown. Doubtless to the loungers on the Promenade des Anglais—the yawning brides and bridegrooms, the gamblers, the invalids, the globe-trotters—he is a white-haired gentleman, and nothing more. One man's fame is of no more consequence in the sum of human happiness than is the length of one of those blue, white-crested billows to the great sea behind it. But the good, as well as the evil that men do, lives after them. The practical benefit of Sir Charles Gavan Duffy's ideas, the wholesome influence of his noble life, and the pure pleasure derived from his writings, will be felt among his fellows as long as those waves continue to roll in. In man's life, as in nature, agitation and conflict smooth the way for "Lovely Peace." The ecstatic poet, the fiery patriot, the harassed Minister, have developed into the sage, mild, lovable, tolerant, and practical teacher. It is as if we gazed on the sunset of a stormy day, and noted how much beauty was due to reflection from retreating clouds.

No sketch of Sir Charles's career would be complete without a reference to one of the most amiable and significant features of his character—I mean his unfailing kindness to young men, especially young men of talent, and, above all, promising young literary aspirants. He was for a long period, and to the utmost extent of his slender means and Ministerial power, the Mæcenas of Australia. A whole generation of needy geniuses flourished, or, at least, were saved from premature extinction, under his kindly encouragement. He took them into his house, found them funds, and obtained congenial employment for them. Letters are extant from such men as Marcus Clarke (author of "For the Term of his Natural Life"), Henry Kendall (in my judgment the one great Australian poet), and Daniel Henry Deniehy, the Australian Demosthenes, which acknowledge Sir Charles's fatherly care in touching terms. The young colonial *littérateur* in those days sprang up on rough and weedy soil. Every man's energies were absorbed in money-getting; and the spectacle of a young fellow devoting himself to versifying or romancing excited contemptuous pity rather than admiration or sympathy.

As a speaker, Sir Charles suffered from the drawback of a voice weakened by bronchial troubles. But the music of his periods asserted itself, even with an imperfect instrument. Never did an orator produce more elegantly finished or more skilfully compacted sentences, each of them a gem, and all grouped together into one harmonious design. He is one of the few masters of speech whose orations can be read and re-read with pleasure; even if, like Macaulay's, they, when first delivered, may have produced somewhat the impression of being read from an elaborate printed essay. He always does everything well, and down to the smallest details of punctuation his work is a model for the careless and the lazy among writers and speakers of the present day.

FAIR EXCHANGE.

By GRANT ALLEN.

AS she seated herself in the omnibus, she saw Mrs. Watts opposite.

"Why, Milly, is that you?" Mrs. Watts cried, catching her eye. "How *very* singular!"

Whenever you stir outside your own door in London it's ten to one but you happen upon somebody you did not expect to meet: in spite of which fact, we all exclaim every time, "How very singular!" 'Tis a human fallacy. "Wasn't it odd?" friends say to you. "We went to Constantinople, and who do you think were the first people we met—but the Willoughby-Joneses?" To which the foolish reply, "What an extraordinary coincidence!" But the wise man answers, "Exactly what I should have anticipated."

Milly Walters, however, was not *quite* so wise as you and I are, so she exclaimed after her kind, "Mrs. Watts! Oh, how funny I should knock up against you!"

The gentlemanly looking person with the bushy black beard, who made room for Milly to sit beside him, smiled a pleasant smile at this episode of recognition. He was a gentleman, Milly felt sure, because he moved aside for her so politely; added to which—though that was a detail—he wore a diamond ring sufficiently big and sufficiently bright to guarantee anybody's perfect gentility.

"Going shopping, dear?" Mrs. Watts asked.

"Yes," Milly answered, dropping her voice to a confidential whisper. "To Liberty's first. Isn't Harold a darling? He's just given me twenty pounds to buy an evening dress, and now I'm off to choose it."

The gentlemanly person with the bushy black beard seemed to take a fatherly interest in this domestic news, and to approve of Liberty's as the seat of the purchase.

"Fares, please!" said the conductor, unsympathetically interrupting.

Milly pulled out her purse, and hunted for a penny. Being a woman, of course she kept her pence in her purse—owing, no doubt, to the fact that Providence and the dressmaker had denied her the alternative of a waistcoat pocket. Equally of course, in hunting for the penny she displayed to the world four five-pound notes, a sovereign, and some loose silver. Then, when the penny had been successfully tracked to its lair in the inmost recess of the *porte-monnaie*, she engaged in hide-and-seek at the back of her dress for some time with her pocket. Pocket won for a round or two; but at last Milly succeeded in evading its elusiveness, and slipped back the purse into its mysterious hiding-place.

At Oxford Circus a sudden thought struck her. "Let's walk down Regent Street," she said, "and look into the shop windows."

The originality of the idea took Mrs. Watts's fancy. As they rose, the gentlemanly person withdrew his hand rather quickly, with an air of surprise. Next moment Milly was aware that something curious had happened to him. "Hi! Stop!" he cried frantically to the conductor, as the omnibus moved on. "I—I want to get out, I say. Stop! Stop!" His face was red and agitated.

He jumped from the step and followed them persistently down the street, standing to look into each window where they paused, and evidently trying to come up close to them. His efforts were so obvious as to be positively inartistic. "What a horrid man!" Milly exclaimed. "He makes me quite afraid. Do come on, Mrs. Watts. I *must* get away from him."

But the man's expression seemed rather one of fear than of curious interest. He was perplexed and agitated. He had haunted eyes, one would say. It looked as if he had lost something, and was trying to recover it.

He followed them close up to Liberty's door. There he gave a hurried glance, caught the shop-walker's stern eye, hesitated, faltered, and darted away towards Soho. Milly was glad to be rid of him.

"DO COME ON, MRS. WATTS. I MUST GET AWAY FROM HIM."

How lucky she had brought Mrs. Watts along with her! If she had come by herself she would really have been quite unable to decide between the pale blue silk with the Chinese embroidery and the Empire white satin with the apple-green trimming. But Mrs. Watts had such taste, and she decided for the Empire. "It suits you so well, dear," she said, "and Harold loves you in satin." Which was perfectly true; for Harold would have loved her in rags if she wore them.

"We shall only have to alter the bodice, Madam," the girl said, fitting it. "The skirt hangs perfectly. Yes, by Monday night certain."

"You 'll look sweet in it at the Pendleburys'," Mrs. Watts interjected.

"I'll pay for it now," Milly said, and pulled her purse out, or, rather, failed to find it, for no purse was there. She fumbled for a minute or two in the folds of her dress. No—lost—or stolen! "I know what it is!" she cried at last, with a flash of recognition. "That horrid man in the omnibus! He made way for me on purpose! He has picked my pocket!"

Mrs. Watts looked blank. She was a sentimental soul. "I believe he did!" she exclaimed. "And that's why he followed us. Oh, Milly, didn't you notice? There was *remorse* on his face. I believe it was his first crime, and poverty had driven him to it, and he longed after it was done to come up and restore it. But we misunderstood—and repulsed him!"

"Poverty!" Milly answered, with a curl of her pretty lip. "And that diamond on his finger! First crime?—not a bit of it! The brute has robbed me!"

"They mostly *do* wear diamond rings, Madam," the young woman interposed, with the social omniscience of the London shop-girl; "and they're generally paste. It makes people less suspicious."

Milly burst into tears. "Well, I can't have the dress now!" she cried. "I've nothing to pay for it with. And oh, Mrs. Watts! how shall I ever go home and tell Harold I've lost it? I *dare* not face him. He'll ask me why I kept my pennies in my purse, and why I don't have pockets at the side as men do."

"That would be impossible, Madam," the girl said, "with the present fashion."

However, we must all of us face the worst at times; and when Harold returned from the Admiralty that evening Milly met him with the sad news that her pocket had been picked, and twenty odd pounds extracted from it by a rogue in an omnibus.

Now Harold was a man; and men, as you know, have most provoking ways. "I don't believe it's been picked at all," he said quietly, kissing her. (Men *will* kiss one under such circumstances with horrid calmness, just to show their manly superiority to fortune.) "Either it's got caught in your dress, or, what's far more likely, you've left it behind on the seat of the omnibus. Those nasty back pockets—you never *can* get at them. You shuffle and struggle and grope about in the dark, and finally succeed in landing your purse between the folds of the cushion. Did you keep your ticket with the number of the omnibus? No; I thought not. And did you call at once at Scotland Yard to report it?"

Milly's face was crimson. "I never thought of that, darling."

Harold kissed her again. She did wish he'd lose his temper. "Well, bring *me* the dress," he said. "I'll search it thoroughly. And then, if I don't find it, I'll take a hansom down to the Lost Property Office after dinner and report the omnibus. It was an Atlas, I suppose?"

"It was—a green and yellow one."

"Forward the dress!" Harold cried.

The housemaid produced it.

Harold felt it up and down. "Why, what's this?" he asked, clutching at something hard in it.

Hope and fear fought wildly in Milly's breast—hope that he had found it; fear that he would think her a little fool for overlooking it.

Harold withdrew his hand. No purse was there. But he held between finger and thumb a diamond ring, or what looked like one, caught by the loose threads at the edge of the pocket, and entangled in them tightly.

Milly saw it all in a moment. The gentlemanly person with the bushy black beard had picked her pocket as they crossed Oxford Circus; he had withdrawn his hand hastily when she rose to leave the omnibus; the ring had caught in the scurry, and slipped from his finger; he had discovered his loss at once, and jumped from the omnibus in hopes of picking the pocket again, this time to recover his own lost property; but he had abandoned the chase when they turned into Liberty's, where Milly was likely to feel for her purse, and might give him into custody on a charge of pocket-picking.

She explained to Harold. He glanced at the ring. "Paste, most likely!" he said gloomily. "It isn't probable a

pickpocket would go about with a real diamond on his finger worth a hundred guineas."

For once Milly was logical. "But if it wasn't real," she objected, "*why* should he follow us up, after he'd collared my purse, and expose himself to the chance of being detected and handed over to a policeman?"

"You take too much for granted," her husband answered, with that horrid male assumption of superior wisdom. "He saw you had money. He may not have had the chance of finding his way to the cunningly concealed mouth of your labyrinthine pocket while you sat in the omnibus, but knowing it was worth picking, he may have followed you up, and picked it at his leisure as you and Mrs. Watts were looking into Madame Louise's."

"How do you know we looked into Madame Louise's?" Milly asked, quite trembling at so much second sight.

Her husband smiled. "How do I know you looked? Well, Milly, what a question! And to a man who's been nearly five years married! Inference, darling, inference; a simple deduction from common observation on the human female."

He eyed the ring. "It *does* sparkle, though," he murmured. "I'm not an expert, but it *looks* like a diamond. And yet, what nonsense! They make these things now so as to deceive the very elect. Paste sparkles like a Koh-i-noor. Even jewellers are sometimes taken in at first sight. And, *most* unfortunately, I'm not a jeweller."

"What shall we do about it?" Milly asked.

Harold paused to consider. "I'm not quite sure about the *law*," he said dubiously; "but——"

"Oh, bother the law!" Milly answered with decision. "If it's real, I'll keep it, law or no law, you may be certain. He didn't ask *me* about the law with my purse. What's that French saying, you know, about 'C'est à messieurs les assassins de commencer,' or something?"

"There's point in that," Harold assented gravely. "It's diamond cut diamond. Well, I'll dine upon it first—a wonderful clearer of the judgment, dinner. And then, I think, I'll trot round to Scotland Yard and report your purse; you may have left it in an Atlas. But I don't fancy, Millums, I'll mention this ring. It may be treasure-trove, don't you know, and then the Crown'll claim one half, and the lord of the manor will seize the other. I wonder who's the lord of the manor at Oxford Circus? He'll have an action, no doubt, with the lords of the manor at Regent Street and St. John's Wood, to decide the question whether the ring became treasure-trove when the thief first dropped it, or when you missed your purse, or when I found it in your pocket here in Laura Terrace. And the police will claim it, too, or the judge'll impound it. So, perhaps, on the whole, it'll be safer to say nothing at Scotland Yard about it. If the law can cheat us out of the purse and the ring together, giving the money to the thief and the diamond to the receiver, you may be sure it'll do it. I'll take the thing round to Macdougall's to-morrow and get him to value it for me. He knows us, Macdougall, and he'll tell us the truth about it."

In that faith he slept; while Milly, penitent, lay awake half the night, in remorse for the probable loss of a new evening dress, or twenty guineas.

The jeweller looked at the ring next day, when Harold submitted it to him, and pronounced it at once a good gem of the first, or nearly the first, water.

"What value?" Milly asked, trembling.

Macdougall put his head on one side and regarded it critically. "To sell—or for probate?" he inquired with Scotch caution.

"To sell," Harold answered. "I should like to dispose of it."

"Ah'd give you seventy pun' down," the jeweller answered after a mental calculation.

A sudden thought struck Milly. "Perhaps it's stolen," she exclaimed. "He may have taken it himself. In that case, Harold, we ought to look out the owner."

"Stolen!" the jeweller interjected. "Weel, we can soon find that oot for ye. Will you gie me the particulars? and ah'll set your mind at rest at once aboot it."

Milly detailed her story. The jeweller listened, amused.

"It'll no be stolen, then," he said at last; "or wad the mon hae been wearing it openly on his finger? But leave it wi' me, and ah'll find oot who sold it him. In the trade we can find oot these things for certain."

So he did, sure enough. Two days later he sent them word that the ring had been made to order for an unknown customer, who had called for it in person, by a reputable firm in Hatton Garden.

Milly and Harold went down and

"IT LOOKS LIKE A DIAMOND."

interviewed the vendor. "What sort of person?" he said. "Well, he was tall and broad-built, very big across the shoulders, a clean-shaven gentleman."

Milly shook her head. "My man had a big black beard," she objected sadly.

"The most natural form of disguise," the diamond merchant answered.

"What features?" Harold inquired.

"Aquiline nose, piercing eyes, shaggy overhanging eyebrows," the merchant replied, shutting his eyes for a moment and recalling his customer.

"That's him!" Milly exclaimed, regardless of the purists, and using the average idiom of an English lady. "That's him; I'm sure of it. Harold, dear, it *wasn't* stolen."

That evening, the order to alter the bodice was duly registered, and Milly went to bed fifty pounds the richer.

"A fair exchange is no robbery," Harold murmured with satisfaction as he surveyed her three days later in the Empire satin. "After all, Milly, there's something to be said for the present style of women's pockets!"

"You're the only man living who ever admitted it," Milly answered, smiling. One can afford to smile when one's fifty pounds richer for having one's purse stolen.

CUJUS CULPA?

Establish in some better way
My life, thou Godhead! that I may
Know whether it as virtue ranks
To scorn Thy gifts, or give Thee thanks

For now I feel Thee near, unsought.
But why, when I seemed worth Thy thought,
High-soul'd, impatient for a task—
Why not have had me then, I ask?

No mountings of the spirit please;
Thou dost accept our dregs and lees;
The wise are they that feel Thy rod,
And grief alone is near to God.

JOHN EGLINTON.

THE SACRED CROWN OF HUNGARY.

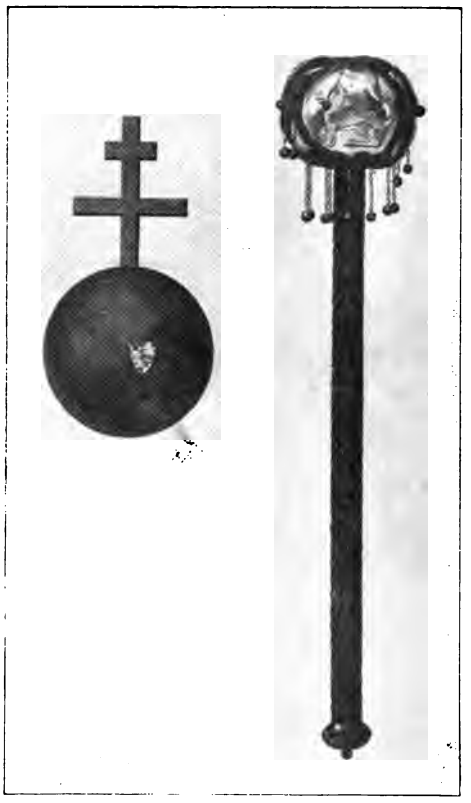
By DR. JEAN HOROWITZ.

THE Holy Coat of Treves has a rival, so formidable indeed that the eyes of the civilised world have been turned to it. It is none less than the crown and insignia of St. Stephen of Hungary. There may, perchance, be crowns more gorgeous, more valuable, more historic; but there are none more sacred; and never has it seemed to be of greater import and sacredness than in this year of grace, which, as everybody knows, is the millennium of Hungary as a State. The Exhibition at Budapest, representing as it does the highest efforts of the world's civilisation, marks in a general way this mighty millennium; but the occasion was specially and appropriately commemorated on June 8, which was the twenty-ninth anniversary of the coronation of the Emperor Francis Joseph as King of Hungary. That day will long be memorable in the annals of the country, and more particularly in the minds of those who had the good fortune to be present in Budapest. In the morning a procession, which in its splendour fairly rivalled any seen in the Middle Ages, proceeded to the Royal Castle, which stands towering high on Buda Hill, on the right bank of the Danube, where they lowered their standards before the King and Queen, who were standing on the balconies, with nearly all the members of the royal family. After that solemn act they proceeded to St. Matthias' Coronation Church, where for three days the sacred crown of St. Stephen, together with his cloak and the insignia of royalty, had been publicly exhibited, and carried them to the splendid new Parliament Houses at Pesth.

ST. STEPHEN'S CROWN.

In other countries the crown is regarded as a fine bauble on the one hand, and on the other as the symbol of the monarch's supreme power; in Hungary, however, it is an object of quite peculiar and affectionate regard, and is considered the symbol not alone of the State, but equally of the people's independence and rights. St. Stephen's crown, as the most recent investigations have shown, really consists of two crowns. The upper part is the crown which Pope Sylvester II. presented to Prince Vayk, who himself embraced Christianity, and, rejecting his heathen name, became known as Stephen, and brought about the conversion of the Hungarians to Christianity. He further induced them to abandon their fierce nomadic life, and secured them a place among Western nations. Owing to Stephen's deeply religious mind and his converting his subjects, Pope Sylvester II. conferred on him and his successors the right to style themselves "Apostolic Kings." King Francis Joseph, who now wears his crown, also retains the title. The lower part of the present royal crown consists of a crown sent to one of Stephen's successors, about 1078, by the Greek Emperor Michael Ducas. During the stormy times of civil war and

the struggle against the Osmanlis, the crown had a very curious fate. In 1301 King Wencelas III., King of Bohemia, carried it off to Prague. On one occasion, King Otto, riding by night with it tied on to his saddle, lost it, though subsequently it was found again, buried in the mud. A few years later, after asking for the hand of the daughter of Ladislaus Apor, the Vayvode of Transylvania, he visited that country, but was thrown into prison and deprived of his crown, which the wily ruler kept for several years. Being desecrated there, it was forbidden to be worn. Consequently another crown had been provided for Charles Robert of Anjou by the Pope, but the people had such love and veneration for the old one that, after great trouble, it was regained. Nevertheless, in 1440, Queen Elizabeth pawned it to Frederick IV. for 2500 florins; but almost a quarter of a century after, it was redeemed for 80,000 florins in gold. Again, in 1849, when the revolution in Hungary was suppressed, the crown met with fresh adventures. Louis Kossuth ordered it to be hidden from the enemy, and, accordingly, it was secretly buried at Orsova, near the Iron Gates on the Danube. Five years elapsed before the Austrian Government discovered its hiding-place.



HUNGARIAN REGALIA: THE ORB AND SCEPTRE.

No wonder that the Hungarians have gone mad with joy over this wonderful crown. All the eighty-nine counties and all the municipalities of Hungary had sent deputies to take part in the banderium or mounted procession, which formed a guard of honour for the crown from the church to the Houses of Parliament. They all wore gorgeous costumes, representative of the fashions of past centuries. Pageants so brilliant as this was have rarely been witnessed in the Occident since the Middle Ages and the times when the guilds arranged so many processions and festivals. The nobles of the land were there, clad in gay-coloured costumes glittering with gold and gems, and ambling proudly on richly caparisoned horses. Every class, every profession, trade, and craft had sent representatives. Priests and laymen, warriors and civilians, vied with one another in the picturesqueness of their splendid costumes.

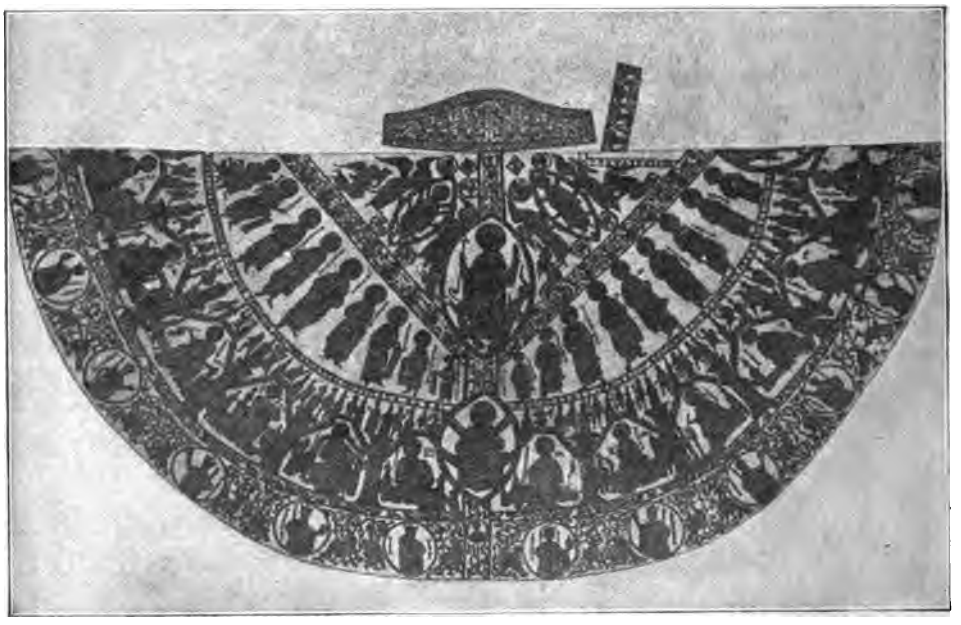
After long waiting, at last was heard the flourishes of trumpets which announced the approach of the guard of honour accompanying the crown. Baron Perczel, the Minister of the Interior, rode at the head. After him came members of both Houses of Parliament and the municipal banderia. In advance of each municipality were the ancient banners which once waved over their ancestors when they went out to fight the rude Tartar, or to resist the encroachments of the cruel Turk. No less conspicuous than the brilliant-coloured dresses of the riders were the extremely rich trappings of their horses; while their most curious old arms were enough to gladden the heart of every antiquary and to fill it with envy. The German colony in Transylvania, which is already eight hundred years old, had sent its representatives, who were dressed in costumes like those worn by the original settlers that belonged to the same Saxon coast tribes that invaded England. The Parliamentary representatives were followed by the princes of the Church in chariots bright with gold and other colours.

THE GEMS OF ST. STEPHEN'S CROWN.

Conspicuous among the dignitaries of the Church was Cardinal Vaszary, the Primate of Hungary, in his red gala coach drawn by six jet black horses with gorgeous golden trappings. The ecclesiastics fairly rivalled the laymen in respect of the rich colours of their dresses, their glittering jewels, and all that lent splendour to the show.

The Hungarian Standard was borne by the Banner Lords on horseback; then came the guard of the Hungarian crown in curious armour, and immediately behind it the coach containing the wonderful crown and other insignia of royalty. It was plainly seen, for almost all the upper part of the coach is of glass. On each side of this marvellous coach were halberdiers and guardsmen. After the insignia were seen the richly decorated coaches in which rode the keeper of the Hungarian crown and the highest dignitaries of the State and the Court, about fifty in all.

The scene, when the procession escorting the crown reached the large square in front of the town side of the new Houses of Parliament, one of the most gorgeous modern buildings, was truly overwhelming. The two Houses of Parliament held a joint sitting in the splendid cupola hall, and a tablet with the "Millennium law" engraved on it was unveiled in the presence of the crown, amidst frantic "Eljen" cries for the King. Then the members of the Legislature headed the cavalcade, which bore the insignia back to the royal castle, delivered it up in the Throne Hall, and paid homage to the King.



ST. STEPHEN'S CLOAK

WOMAN: HER HAT, AND THE HEIGHT OF ABSURDITY.

By R. S. LOVEDAY.

Notice to Ladies.—The Management ask as a special favour that they will not continue to wear the Objectionable High Hat in the Theatre.—*Verb. Sap.*

WHILE Lord Ronald Gower relied on the courtesy of one London editor for the opportunity of fulminating against the tall hat of the mere man, one of the astutest caterers of amusement in the Metropolis was actually paying for the privilege of addressing the subtler sex on the same subject in the words which head this column. Nothing could indicate more clearly the exact value of the objections to the headgear of the two sexes than the methods by which the critics put forward their respective pleas. The silk hat which completes the well-dressed man may be hideous, may even be uncomfortable, but it affects the wearer only. The last word that its detractors can utter is practically the protest of æstheticism. The man who insists on retaining the "topper" is, after all, his own worst enemy. If, however, he did not remove his headgear indoors, the protest would assume quite another form. He would become the enemy of everybody whose optic nerve did not possess the quality of a Röntgen ray. Unhappily, the human eye lacks the exquisite ingenuity of the "x rays." Unhappily, the fashion of the day has decreed that the headgear of women should be vast, adumbrating. Unhappily, too, society does not demand that women should unbonnet themselves save on special occasions. Such occasions do not include theatre matinées or concerts. *Hinc illæ lachrymæ.*

THE DUCHESS OF DEVONSHIRE.
Painted by Gainsborough.

The headgear adopted by women of the day has, in short, become an intolerable nuisance. This is somewhat of a contradiction, for a latter-day prophet has declared that the swirls and eddies of the rising tide which, for want of a better name, is labelled New Womanism, are nothing more or less than the flowing of femininity towards an altruistic ideal. So far as dress, however, goes, that ideal has begun at the wrong end, by working its way upwards. It disturbed nobody but the wearers that women should cramp their feet in high-heeled Chinese shoes. Yet the natural boot and the well-shaped foot, reaching their apotheosis in Trilby, have become the commonplaces of convention. After the crinoline craze swept over the land, it hurt nobody except the wearers that woman should cling to the petticoat. And yet the divided skirt is no longer a

fantasy, and the beneficent bicycle has made the bloomer blossom into popularity. But everybody has a distinct grievance against the feminine hat; yet it has not only remained, but has come to assume such colossal proportions that the Legislature of Ohio has been constrained to deal with it by statute, and a London manager by public advertisement. The modern milliner, indeed, has much to answer for in aiding and abetting the construction of headgear which represents everything between an aviary, a flower-box, and a harvest home. Philanthropists with hearts bleeding for the birds of the air have long since carried on a campaign against the fashion of feathers. Remembering as they do that the masculine tall hat practically exterminated the poor little beaver, they foresee the extermination of whole species of birds. Yet, despite the fact that Parliament has been called upon to regulate this matter, Bond Street still keeps the bird-stuffer busy. Mr. Ruskin and his school have been fuming against burlesques of Nature this quarter of a century and more, yet the crimson poppy nods gaily on the heads of our womankind, cornflowers and orchids bask brilliantly on the hats of the period, and miniature jungles wave luxuriantly and defiantly wherever women are gathered together. The white man effects a clearance of the forest and the jungle: but that is only when he ventures into savage lands. At home he has to put up with them in all their rank luxuriance. For Fashion and the Fates and Femininity—the three most forcible F sharps in the gamut of experience—will have it so.

It has not been ever thus. The womenfolk of the Saxons and the Danes were quiet, unobtrusive creatures. Man was undoubtedly master, and the women did not dispute the fact by attempting to add a cubit to their stature in the shape of headgear. Nor did high hats, like so many marvels, come across with the Conqueror. It was not, indeed, until the fourteenth century that woman began to put out her horns. She did so literally, for the reticulated headdress came into vogue in England, having followed Queen Katharine from France. Great pads of false hair jutted out from each side of the head, and to these was pinned a neckcloth or gorget. Poets and priests railed against the fashion in vain. A French satirist declared that the horns seemed to be intended to wound men. "I know not," quoth he, "whether they call gibbets or corbels that which sustain their horns, which they consider so fine, but I venture to say that St. Elizabeth is not in paradise

THE HATS OF 1787.

A PARIS BELLE OF 1786.

MRS. COWLEY, 1786.

1811.

1780.

1828.

1819.

for having such baubles. Moreover, they make a great encumbrance: for between the gorget and the temple and horns may pass a rat, or the largest weasel on this side Arras." A bishop advised his flock to cry out "Beware of the ram!" when they saw a horned woman approach; and one writer ridiculed the women who made themselves horned with plaited hemp or linen, and "so counterfeit dumb beasts." From that time to the present women have been counterfeiting everything under the sun.

Having wearied of horns, they turned gaily during the last days of the House of York to the human heart. The heart-hats were usually made of black silk or velvet, ornamented with gold studs. Over the forehead shone a gorgeous jewel—imitated in our own day by the little wisp of hair which curls insinuatingly down the brow. The folk-lorists of the future may see in this a symbolical reminder of Eve and the serpent. And then the women of England anticipated the Norwegian dramatist and his Master-builder by constructing their hats on the principle of a Gothic steeple. These wonderful structures towered half a yard high, and from the point there hung a huge veil of muslin. The steeples were railed against just as the horns had been. A friar actually perambulated France on a crusade against them, exciting little boys to torment the wearers, and giving them certain days of pardon for so doing. The urchins only too readily obeyed his behest by endeavouring to raze the steeples, "so that the ladies were forced to seek shelter in places of safety." He was even so successful as to enforce the women to bring these headdresses to the market-place, where he burned them all. Of course, this reform was brief, "for, like as snails, when anyone passes by them, draw in their horns, and when all danger seems over put them forth again, so these ladies, shortly after the preacher had quitted their country, forgetful of his doctrine and abuse, began to resume their former head-dresses, and wore them even higher than before." The battle of the belles, in fact, consisted in who should have the highest headgear, and these hats in the air fascinated the gentle sex for many a day, just as the aërial music charmed Miss Hilda Wangel. Ibsen's play, indeed, might be regarded as an allegory dealing with the fashion in hats. Solness, you remember, got tired of building spires, and similarly women wearied of their steeple hats. Yet ever the pillars of the Church, they did not abandon the ecclesiastical, for with Henry VII. came in the square or hood hat, which made them look like nuns. The hair was plastered down over the ears, just like the French fashion of to-day, and was enveloped in a cloth hood, fastened at the throat with a brooch. Skelton, the Laureate of the reign, sings a song of the belle of the day, who considers—

A DESSERT IMITATION OF FASHION, 1828.

> Herself gay
> Upon a holyday,
> When she doth array
> And girdeth in her gates,
> Stitched and pranked with plates,
> Her kirtle bristow red;
> With cloths upon her head—
> They weigh a ton of lead!

In the time of Henry VIII. the nunlike hood evolved into the coif, familiarised to moderns by the portraits of Mary Queen of Scots, and that, in turn, diminished gradually; so that hats were scarcely of any note during the Stuart régime, with the one exception of the Puritan outburst.

As a matter of fact, fashion fastened on

1829.

other parts of the attire, for it is curious that every part of dress is not made equally extravagant at the same time. Thus, Elizabeth developed the ruff, and hats were neglected; often, indeed, they were not worn at all by women. Charles II., again, magnified masculine attire, so as to obscure the world of women. Men aped the gorgeous plumage of the male bird: women were content with the humbler feathers of the female.

The extravagances of hair-dressing, which reached their climax in the Pompadour, equally militated against any extravagances in hats. The ringlets of the belles of Charles the Second's Court gave way to wonderful coiffures, which remind one of the extraordinary plume which used to decorate the head of the Mikado. The hair was combed upwards from the forehead and surmounted by rows of lace and ribbons, while a kerchief or lace scarf was thrown over it. Hats were thus rendered unnecessary; the coiffures were more than enough in themselves. To such tremendous proportions did these attain that in 1774 the lady playgoers of Paris very nearly were the means of creating a riot. Indeed, no hat, however extravagant, could in any way compare with those coiffures. Frequently they were as high as two feet, and recalled alternately a garden, a ship at sea, and an old curiosity shop. One wit has it that had the mode continued, modern architecture would have felt the effect. That is a jest, but it is a solemn fact that one Parisian hairdresser made a fortune by patenting a spring by which a coiffure could be lowered when the wearer was passing a door or stepping into her carriage. At last the fashion reached such a pitch that in 1778 the manager of the Opera anticipated the Ohio Legislature by issuing an edict that no lady whose headdress went beyond a certain height should enter the amphitheatre or stalls. The altruistic ideal had, in fact, to be enforced with a strong hand.

English women, however, gradually regained their reason by lowering the coiffure and reintroducing hats. Some of these were certainly monstrous, but not a few were picturesque. Such, for example, is the hat worn by Elizabeth, Duchess of Devonshire, immortalised by Gainsborough. Of course, her Grace was no mere doll, for has not the sombre Gibbon assured us, despite the fact that she rejected his hand, that Bess was "a mortal for whom the wisest man, historic or medical, would throw away two or three worlds if he had them in possession"? She was a woman of culture—it is exactly a hundred years ago since she published, anonymously, her journal of a journey through Switzerland—

1829.

THE CZARINA, 1830.

1829.

THE DUCHESS OF KENT, 1831.

THE DUCHESS OF CUMBERLAND, 1830.

1033.

1837.

and was not likely to go to extremes. That rule, of course, is not universal, for you see Mrs. Cowley—the "Tenth Muse," as Gifford called her, thereby anticipating Sir Edwin Arnold's Ephemera—wearing a top-heavy structure. But then "Anna Matilda's" strong point was not head. When the crowns came down, the brims broadened, much to the amusement of the caricaturist. One wit scoffed at the fashion of 1828 by publishing the picture of an inverted wine-glass with this inscription—

> Turn a tumbler upside down,
> The foot for a hat, the cork for a crown;
> Some grapes for trimming will give an air,
> And as for sleeves have ready a pear.
> When join'd together, 'tis sure to tell
> A picture true of a modern belle.

The hat gradually gave way to the bonnet, which came into vogue with this century, and has gone through many stages. At first, and for a long time, it was shaped like a coal-scuttle—sometimes with ribbons hanging loose, sometimes tied beneath the chin, sometimes on the side. The coal-scuttle bonnet is inseparable from the early Victorian era, just as the ruff will always be associated with Queen Bess. But the downfall of the bonnet came on apace; for in the early sixties the chignon and the crinoline dealt a deadly blow at the coal-scuttle, which, in deference to the weird application of the law of gravity as regulating feminine fashion, diminished as the lower extremities of women became exaggerated. To-day it is the badge of the lasses of the Salvation Army. In accordance with the principle, practised by the Puritans, of identifying godliness with ugliness, they have proudly made it their own to signify that they have abandoned the world, the flesh, and the devil. So strange are the caprices of Fashion.

Its place has been filled in turn by how many fashions! One year we have the inane Dolly Varden and the tiny toque. The next we get a vast sombrero structure, a broad base, on which the marvellous ingenuity of milliner can build whatever she chooses, or plant the gaudiest flowers that the hothouse rears. A fashion, of course, is never ridiculous except in retrospect, for what is described one day in wobbly English by "our lady correspondent" as a perfect dream of beauty, becomes in the light of to-morrow a wild nightmare of sheer hideousness. The law of the survival of the fittest seems, indeed, to break down completely in the milliner's shop, or at least the atavistic lapses are so frequent that the observations of the philosopher of fashion become hopelessly obscured. The optimists, who point proudly to Girton and talk of the Higher Education, may tell you that when women have quite learned the value of looking after the insides of their heads, they will cease to cover the outside with gewgaws. But the man in the street is not quite so hopeful.

A TRIP TO SCARBOROUGH, 1783.

Photo by Chancellor, Dublin.

DAY-DREAMS.

FLUFFUMS.

By LEONARD MERRICK.

FREDDY LUDLOW was the son of a Rector in the Shires, and as he did not manifest any inclination for the Church, his father declared that the only thing for him was to be a barrister. The process by which the Rector arrived at the alternative is not very plain, but he did arrive at it, and Freddy accordingly went up to town, and ate his dinners, and prepared himself to shine in the profession of all others for which he was the most unfit.

He was a short young man, with a shock of stubborn hair, mild blue eyes, and an expression of amiable innocence. To look a fool, when you are decidedly the reverse, may be very advantageous in life, if you are independent of your neighbours' good opinion; but to look a fool if you have to rely on their assistance to reach the first rung of the ladder, is the next worst thing to being one.

Nobody entrusted Freddy with a brief, and after a while he found his vocation distinctly tedious. To perspire in Court, and make his head ache in the acquisition of legal knowledge which he would never apparently have an opportunity to display, seemed to him stupid. Even the view of the tulips and the murmur of the fountain bored him by degrees; so at last he allowed his wig to repose in its box, and the drab and grey volumes on the shelf to grow dusty, and he took to writing comedies, on which he wasted his postage-stamps, and which returned to him—when the managers did not lose them—after many days.

How long he might have continued the occupation if nothing had occurred to interrupt him it is impossible to say. As it happened, however, when he had amassed a collection of rejected manuscripts considerably bulkier than the dusty library, his father died—the end having been hastened by the collapse of one of those bubbles which seem especially blown for the destruction of widows and parsons. He died, and Freddy was left with nothing but his sorrow and a hundred pounds. He was not very practical, but it was obvious to him that he would have to earn a living now, and, as the shock left him capable of reflection, he began to ask himself what he should do.

As a result, he decided to go on the stage. He had a passion for the stage, if he could not write for it he would act on it. He had not the least idea that his appearance intensified the difficulty of obtaining an engagement a thousand-fold, and he betook himself to an agent, to whom he imparted his desire, and paid a booking-fee.

The agent was an affable man, but slow—so slow that presently the hundred pounds was only fifty, and in view of the fact, Freddy visited other agents, all of whom seemed strangely to resemble the first gentleman in their characters.

Then Freddy answered advertisements in the theatrical papers, but nobody ever answered *him*, and he was within measurable distance of despair and a clerkship, when, through the interest of an acquaintance in the Temple, who also dabbled in dramatic literature, he found himself "walking on" in evening dress at a West-End theatre, with nothing to say, at a guinea a-week.

The piece did not run very long, and in the next one there was not a "ball-scene," so no "guests" were required; but having scented the footlights, he felt that any other vocation was henceforth impossible, and he had profited, moreover, by the conversation in the dressing-room.

He now understood that he had wasted his time and his money by pinning his faith on the agent fraternity before he had played some parts, and gained a few "notices"; and on the same principle he realised that it was useless addressing graceful letters to managers who had never heard of him. The only thing he could do was to bombard them with introductions. He went to his friend in the Temple again, and lured him into an adjacent bar, and by and by—so beneficial is the judicious application of dry sherry—meek little Freddy Ludlow was "shivering his timbers" in a nautical melodrama to a

Whitechapel audience with a discomfiting habit of making facetious remarks.

Still, it was a stock season, and it meant experience. He murdered a new part every week, and sometimes to applause. After the seafaring party he played a London "rough," "doubling" it with a good clergyman, who came on in the last act, and established the hero's innocence. Then they put on "Arrah-na-Pogue," and he was cast for the Sergeant, and when he muttered the famous line to the effect that his prisoner was "A man in trouble, and not a badger in a hole to be baited by curs like you!" he brought the house down, and subsequently shed tears of triumph in his make-up box.

To follow him through all his vicissitudes would be as unprofitable as he found his profession. It is enough to say that when he had been on the stage for three years—counting the intervals between his engagements, which were a good deal longer than the engagements themselves—he discovered, to his surprise, that his pen, which he had never relinquished, had become quite as valuable a factor towards a livelihood as the theatre.

HE LURED HIM INTO AN ADJACENT BAR.

He had taken to writing short stories, and as he was even asked for these sometimes by a certain appreciative editor, and no manager ever asked him to go and join his company, he gradually hung about the stage-doors less and less, and sat at the table in his bed-room more and more.

One day he was offered the chance of doing the theatrical notices for a minor periodical. It was a very minor periodical, and the salary was proportionate; but the income would at least be regular, and Freddy took a decisive step. He abandoned his hope of becoming an Edmund Kean with an alacrity he had never conceived to be possible, and called himself proudly a dramatic critic—though the laundry bills for so many dress shirts were a consideration.

Later on he returned to his first love, and wrote another play; but this time he collaborated with a dramatist of some position, and for eighteen months basked in the belief that his fortune was made.

It was a drama, at once sensational and domestic. There never *was* so strong a drama, nor had any novice since the world began had such luck as he in finding a well-known man like King willing to work with him. His future was assured now! "A Woman's Crime" was submitted to one of the best houses in London, and the management was delighted with it, and talked of putting it on next. Somehow, though, when the time came they did not. On the whole, they did not know that it suited them. It was a pity that they had not said so in the first instance; but, albeit a little damped, the authors dispatched it somewhere else.

Here certain alterations were suggested, with the intimation that if they were made the piece would be produced in the spring. Freddy did not approve of the suggestions; he considered they were "artistically wrong"; but his partner, who had more worldly wisdom—and a large family to bring up—said that "so long as the damned thing was 'done,' that didn't matter a straw"! And they therefore went to work and chopped and changed as instructed.

The literary carpentering and joining took a good deal of time and thought; and, in spite of all their pains, it was not so well constructed a piece after they had finished as it had been before they began. The manager, however, signified approval of the manner in which his hints had been followed, and so they drew a breath of relief and smiled the smile of labour rewarded.

Their satisfaction, alas! had been premature. When the spring came it was not "A Woman's Crime" which was put into rehearsal. The manager said he should probably do that in the autumn, and, when the autumn came, he said he should most likely do it in the spring. They asked him desperately if he would advance a couple of hundred pounds on account of fees, and he "feared it was impossible." Then they threw up their arms and took the manuscript away from him, and Freddy told his collaborator he might keep it as a souvenir of their association.

But it was an awful blow to him, though he attempted to take it fighting. Until the prospect vanished he had not known how entirely he had been relying on it; and now his scanty means, his obscurity, and his thirty years combined to make a situation that crushed him. He felt suddenly tired and hopeless. He wanted to get on—to be famous. Instead, he was living in one room in Bloomsbury, and dining for a shilling. It had been endurable while he had something to look forward to—even he had not thought about it much then, accepting the life cheerfully. But after dwelling for eighteen months in a castle in Spain, it made his heart ache. He felt like an exile who has dreamed of Piccadilly and wakened to the Cape.

No further possibility of greatness occurred to lighten his gloom, and he plodded on drearily. It said something for his sweetness of disposition that he did not vent his disappointment in spiteful criticisms for the minor periodical at this period. He used to sit in the stalls and clap his hands, and his "copy" was as fair as usual. If he envied the blissful beings whose names were blazoned to all London on the hoardings and the omnibuses, he kept it to himself, and refrained from remarking that "the reception of the latest musical comedy was another instance of what rubbish may hit the public taste."

So things went on like this, until a misfortune happened. The minor periodical died of a weak circulation, and Mr. Frederick Ludlow was out of office.

The cessation of a salary, small as it had been, was a serious matter to him. He made a gallant struggle; he wrote sheafs of short stories, and sent them out broadcast; but as most of the papers that accepted them kept him waiting six months for his money, his industry did not avail him much.

He got into arrears with his landlady, and lay in bed half the day, because he felt his hunger less there. He often dined on a pipe because it was cheaper than a chop; and he pawned his watch and chain, and a ring that had belonged to his father, and his evening suit—which he did not require any more.

He had been—or had called himself—a literary man for so long now that it was a process with him to realise that his pen was useless. He hoped against hope, until the humiliating truth forced itself into acknowledgment by sheer persistency. Well, his writing would not keep him, it was obvious—he owned it! His difficulties were *not* temporary; they had come to stay. He was a failure—a complete, ignominious failure; and — there was nothing for it—he would have to go back to the stage!

He was ashamed to beg the influence of the barrister who had helped him to get his foot in years ago. The barrister was quite a big man now, and *he* had not got on a bit! No, he could not do it. He called on all the agents instead, and quoted his experience. He wrote to his old managers; and he tramped the hot pavements of the Strand daily, trying to look cheerful when he met an actor of his acquaintance, but nervous of stopping to talk to him for long, because he could not afford to ask him to "come and have a drink."

The last engagement that he was able to mention was so very remote that he found it almost as hard to return to the boards as it had been in the first instance for him to get on to them. And he was older—his appearance had not improved with time. Inconsistently too, and as if nature had been anxious to add insult to the world's injury, he had put on flesh. He was now stout. With his tubby figure, and his bristling hair, and his mild little eyes peering out of a weary face, he was as unpromising an applicant for a "part" as any stage-manager was likely to receive. People looked at him and smiled. Everywhere he went he was told there was "no vacancy." His exit was always the signal for subdued laughter, and it was remarked "how funny it was that a man like that should be bothering the agents!" But it was not funny for Freddy—not at all.

At last he did secure an engagement. It was an awful, a terrible descent from what he had expected, but he took it because he had to take it or starve.

He "went out" with the touring company of a London success as prompter, and to play three or four small parts, for

twenty-five shillings a week. During the first act he stood in the wings with the book in his hand; and in the second he appeared on the stage as the foreman of a jury. For half of the third he was in the wings again, and then he had a few lines as an Arab sheik, and so on.

They "opened" in Wigan; if anything could have intensified his depression Wigan would have done it; but nothing could. A touring company has more grades and sets than society in Bedford; and lowest of all who figure in the programme — ignored by the Lover and scorned by the Chambermaid—is the prompter who plays small parts. To be sure, the prompter in his turn may look down upon the Baggage-man; but Freddy was denied this compensation because it was not in his nature to look down on anyone.

He went back to his lodging after the first performance, miserable and exhausted. The constant and hurried changes of costume, coupled with his nervousness—for the stage was so new to him again that he was nervous even with half-a-dozen lines—had thoroughly worn him out. It was not until the following night that he really began to take stock of his surroundings, or that he knew, either, how wretched he was going to be.

His nervousness was observed, and provided material for excellent jests. He was nicknamed "Fluffums," which in theatrical slang signifies a gentleman who "fluffs," or stumbles in his part. He was really such a curious little man that it was refreshing to chaff him. He might have escaped otherwise, as being lowly and beneath one's notice; but the heavy mother had declared he was "consequential," and the adjective was found descriptive; and a "consequential prompter" was an anomaly that could not be tolerated for a moment.

Freddy grew used to the hasty "changes" as the weeks went by, and he schooled himself to stand in the wings holding the 'script without wincing: he grew used to everything except the raillery and disdain. When he reflected that a few months since he had lolled in the West-End stalls, a dramatic critic, and that then his companions of to-day would have bowed and scraped, and contemplated him with reverence, his soul revolted. But he could not hint at his former grandeurs—that would be ridiculous. He was now a prompter, and must be content to be regarded as one. What he had been once had nothing to do with it.

From his humble position in the wings he commanded a good view of the stage, and by and by, when everybody was sure of his part, and there was no need for a prompter's services whatever, a peculiarity was remarked in Fluffums. It was pointed out that he was never absent from his post during Miss Bellamy's big scene. No matter that she, like the rest, was letter-perfect now—no matter how swift a toilette it might necessitate—no sooner did the scene approach than down Fluffums bustled, and stood in the prompt entrance, looking at her with eyes that never wandered from her face.

And, of course, it only meant one thing, though that thing was so wild, and ludicrous, and unprecedented that it was some time before the company could credit it. The prompter had fallen in love with the leading lady!

He only lived to be noticed by her. He was jealous of everybody she spoke to—on the stage and off. He even envied the property-man—for there was sometimes occasion for Miss Bellamy to address a few words to the property-man — to himself alone, the futile prompter, she never had need to speak, nor did he dare to devise an excuse for claiming her attention.

She was pretty, Maud Bellamy, and rather a clever actress, albeit she was still in the provinces, and admitted to being twenty-six. *Her* vicissitudes, too, would have filled an interesting chapter; but she had risen to dazzling heights compared with Freddy, and when somebody told her that she had "made a conquest, and that his name was Frederick Ludlow," she did not even know who was meant. After the joke was explained, she smiled faintly and begged the other, "please not to be so absurd"—because she was a personage. But all the same, she looked at Freddy the next time she passed him—because she was a woman.

And henceforward Freddy was conscious that Miss Bellamy knew he was watching her during her big scene; and Miss Bellamy would instinctively glance across at the prompt entrance as she tottered through the O. P. archway in the snowstorm to assure herself of his presence. Once he was not there—he could not help it—and when he met her in the wings later, waiting to go on in the last act, she stopped and asked him the reason.

"Mr. Ludlow, do you know you nearly made me forget my lines?" she said. "I missed you, and it made me nervous."

Not so nervous as he! His heart thumped, and he stammered at her with a flush on his face—

"I—I beg your pardon. I was very sorry. Mr. Perry couldn't play to-night, you know, and his understudy had to go on, and *I* had to take the understudy's part. I was 'changing' at the time of your scene."

She nodded smiling—

"It doesn't matter; I wondered what had become of you, that was all. It is a very good house, isn't it?" And she passed on.

It did not occupy thirty seconds, but it was an event that sent him home happy, and it was the forerunner of other fragmentary conversations which made him happier still. She knew he was attracted by her, and she saw he was a gentleman; and, though his position in the company prevented her taking his devotion seriously, it interested her and was not unpleasant. It seemed to her rather pathetic that a man of education should be fulfilling such ignoble duties; and she was sorry for him. Not very sorry, and not very interested, because her ambitions did not leave much room in her mind for sympathies of any sort, but just a little, yes, or she would not have provoked comment by condescending to talk to him.

That was at the beginning, and the development was somewhat slow, because Freddy felt so handicapped; but by degrees he taught himself to throw off the feeling of restraint, and by degrees Miss Bellamy found she was giving him encouragement.

Still, she meant nothing by it; only now she was treating him as an equal, and flashing just such a glance at him sometimes as she would have shot at the leading man, or any other admirer who stood on a level with her. It was not considerate, and she knew it was not—it was not dignified, and she knew that too—and so she lectured herself in her dressing-room one night, in the process of changing her gown, and then adopted a manner so very distant towards him that after twenty-four hours of suffering he went up to her, and begged for an explanation.

"Have I offended you in any way, Miss Bellamy?"

She tried to look as if she did not understand.

"Offended me? No—what makes you ask?"

"I was afraid that perhaps I had. You—you are not being so kind to me; you are different."

"I did not know."

"No? I have felt it. . . You aren't angry?"

"Why should I be? Of course not. But——"

"Go on!"

"Do you think it is very good for you that we should talk together quite as much as we have, Mr. Ludlow? Isn't it better that you should not see so much of me?"

He stood gazing helplessly at the stage; his unconcealed misery was very flattering to her.

"I feared it meant that," he said. "Somebody has——"

"Somebody has done nothing—I have been thinking myself; and I have come to the conclusion that I have not been sensible. If I did not like you I should not say it—I should not mind. But I do like you, and—there's my cue!"

HE WAS NEVER ABSENT FROM HIS POST DURING MISS BELLAMY'S BIG SCENE.

They were behind a canvas door, and she darted forward and opened it, and made her entrance with a peal of laughter which jarred upon him this evening, although he knew it was in the "part."

When the curtain had fallen, and all the players were preparing to go home, Freddy waited at the foot of the ladies' staircase for Miss Bellamy to come down. He asked her if he might walk as far as her lodgings with her, so that they could discuss the matter quietly; and, as she had already displayed all the wisdom

possible to her in such a connection, she said he might; and he did, and the result was a foregone conclusion.

She said she should always be his friend, and it was because she was his friend that she wished him to see less of her. And *he* said that to have her friendship was the greatest earthly honour and happiness that he dared aspire to, and so might he not talk to her just as much in future, and even more? There was really nothing to be urged against it, put like that—it was simplicity itself; and she let him hold her hand for a minute and a half at the gate, while telling him he was only to think of her as a sister.

Maud Bellamy had satisfied her conscience, and from that date she flirted with Fluffums wickedly. It was not an honest, open flirtation; it was a sly, sneaking, insidious thing much more deadly, which did its damage under an alias. She called it their "interest in each other," and their "interest in each other" used to take him to her apartments to tea on an average three times a week. He brought her flowers, and she would wear them at the theatre in the first act; and he told her something of his life, and she listened with deep, attentive eyes; and he cried to her how wretched his present position made him, and she comforted him with the "platonic" pressure of slim, white fingers—affecting not to understand that it principally made him wretched because it placed her out of his reach.

And meanwhile he thought her an Angel, though socially she was only a vain, agreeable, and rather selfish woman, who was amusing herself with him. Almost every woman not positively tedious has the desire to be unconventional at some period or other, and — conventionality being, after all, a relative standard—for a country actress to be unconventional is difficult. Miss Bellamy had overcome the difficulty when she determined to flirt with the prompter.

How long the novelty would have pleased her under ordinary circumstances, who shall say? Not many weeks, probably, at best; but, as it was, the end of Freddy's illusion was precipitated by a new arrival on the scene.

The leading man was transferred to another company, and his successor was quite an Adonis, who once had actually played in London. The glamour of the metropolis clung to him still, and the cut of his numerous suits of clothes was positively fascinating. And he paid marked attentions to Miss Bellamy, and the lady did not repulse him. Freddy beheld it all, sick at soul.

Walter Knight, the new leading man, and Miss Maud Bellamy used to stand and talk together, with low voices, in the wings and the passages; and one evening when Freddy came upon them, quite by accident, Miss Bellamy frowned at him and turned aside impatiently. As he passed on, she evidently said something about him, for her companion burst into laughter, and the low comedian, who had observed the incident, winked at the "villain" with appreciation.

Then the chaff took another form, and it was, "Fluffums, beware of jealousy; it is a green-eyed monster!" or, "Fluffums, why so merry?" or "Look at Fluffums' nose—does it hurt you now it's out of joint? Ha, ha, ha! the time *will* come; no matter, Fluffums! Pistols and coffee for four!" Which was all very witty, but as Freddy was not a boy, scarcely in the best of taste.

It took him some time to realise that her pretences had meant nothing; that her earnestness and sympathy had all been humbug, even though he was invited to tea no longer, and often met her walking with Knight in the streets. It is doubtful, indeed, if he would have realised it when he did, but that she very nearly told him so. Of course, it was his "fault"—it was one of those situations where the man is wrong whatever he does. Of course, he had "brought these hard words on himself," and *she* had been mercifully anxious "to spare him the pain of the interview." He had gone to her lodgings, and appealed to her.

"My dear Mr. Ludlow," said the leading lady, with uplifted eyebrows, "I don't know what you complain of! I can't permit any friend to dictate to me which members of the company I may speak to."

Then he had done more. The "secret," that had never been a secret, was openly avowed, and he told her that he loved her, that he worshipped her, that her coldness was breaking his heart. He declared that he was not her "friend"—had never been her "friend"—and that she knew it as well as he.

Miss Bellamy stared at him in a long silence.

"So," she said slowly, "this is my return for consenting to believe you! I *warned* you that I was being unwise, and I let you persuade me against my own judgment. Well, I should have known better: it serves me right!"

"Maud!" gasped Freddy.

"Please don't call me 'Maud,' and please don't let us have any discussion! I made a mistake, and there is nothing more to be said. I was your very good friend, and I hoped I might remain so; but you give yourself the airs of a husband. And something else: when you come spying round the theatre after me to see what man I am talking to, you do a thing I don't allow."

"Spying?" he protested. "I? Oh, I have never——"

"If it hurts your feelings to be told the truth you have only yourself to thank for it. You leave me no alternative when you come here and reproach me. Now, good afternoon, Mr. Ludlow. I am sorry my friendship was so misplaced. I may say I think you might have shown a little more gratitude for it all—*considering*!"

The colour sank from his plain face as if she had lashed him across it. She met his gaze stonily, shrugged her shoulders, and sneered, as she did at the "villain" in the piece.

"Please shut the door quietly after you," said the leading lady; "my head aches."

He went—enlightenment had come, and the darkness fallen; and he was the foreman of the jury, and the Arab sheik, and the rest of it, the same as usual that night. But every nerve in his body was tense with pain, and if Miss Bellamy had known all he was feeling, perhaps when she came into the green-room and found him crouching there woe-begone in a property chair, she would have refrained from remarking audibly that she had "always understood a green-room was reserved for the principals."

He got up and walked out, with a look towards her like a kicked dog, and she surveyed her figure in the pier-glass, and powdered her nose again complacently.

How far they were from suspecting the development that twelve more hours would bring!

When Freddy rose the following morning it was Saturday, and Saturday being treasury, it was necessary for him, like everybody else, to present himself at the theatre at one o'clock. He felt so broken, he had suffered so much more keenly about her than she was worth, that before meeting her again he went into a bar to try if he could pull himself together with some brandy. The *Era* was lying on the counter in front of him, and mechanically, scarcely knowing what he was doing, he began to turn the leaves. As he did so, the title of "A Woman's Crime" leapt out of a page in capital letters, and struck him in the eyes.

HE WENT—ENLIGHTENMENT HAD COME.

It was being produced!—in London!—at the Royal West Central Theatre! The house was "Now closed for rehearsals of 'A Woman's Crime,' by Messrs. J. V. King and Frederick Ludlow." The production would introduce a surprising mechanical effect. There had never been so strong a company before—even at the West Central—as the one which the enterprising management had secured for "A Woman's Crime." So much was expected of the piece that the largest sum of money ever paid before the first night had already been offered to the authors for the American rights. And of course his collaborator had written to his old address, more than a month ago, to tell him all about it, and the letter had never reached him!

He grasped the paper with both hands.

Fires flashed in the sunshine, and he thought he was going to fall off the three-legged stool. He was no longer "Fluffums," the despised prompter. He was a London playwright, a personage to be conciliated; a few months more and he would be a rich man! A sob shook him—of joy and thanksgiving such as he had never known in his life—and he reeled out into the street as if he were drunk.

The company were all on the stage when he had composed himself sufficiently to put in an appearance, and he noticed that, as he entered, everybody looked towards him with a questioning air. Someone in the group was holding a copy of the *Era*, and presently Mr. Knight crossed over to him, and the others hushed their conversation to listen.

"Any relation to the author, Ludlow?" said his rival doubtfully. "I see King has been collaborating with a man of your name for the West Central."

"He has been collaborating with *me*," said Freddy, with great distinctness; "I 'm afraid I shall have to leave you all very shortly, to superintend the final rehearsals."

Yes, and Miss Bellamy was among the group, and heard his answer. And their eyes met, and then she turned away with a look on her face that made him feel sorry for her in the midst of his triumph. It does not often fall to the lot of a provincial actress to have a London dramatist in love with her, and as she thought of what Freddy could have done to push her forward, and certainly *would* have done, it needed all her self-control not to burst into tears.

He was not chaffed or slighted any more while he remained with them. He was congratulated violently, and slapped on the back, and called "dear boy"; and he was pressed to have whiskies-and-soda, and asked if he would "use his influence" on various people's behalf. Never was there such a startling change known as that which occurred in everybody's bearing towards the prompter! There was only one person who did not come up to him and wring his hand, and "hope he would not forget old friends in his prosperity"; there was only one actress in the provinces who, for years afterwards, was remarked to show a strong distaste when a certain subject of theatrical interest was mentioned. Her name was Miss Maud Bellamy, and the subject was the Rise of "Fluffums."

HOW THE OTHER HALF LIVES.

PRISON WARDERS.

By G. E. MITTON.

THE fate of a prison warder may seem to some but one degree removed from that of a prisoner. Duty binds the warder within the gloomy prison walls all day: he cannot leave his post any more than those assigned to his charge. The most irksome part of a prisoner's punishment—the terrible and continuous silence—falls very hardly on the official, for he has not only to endure it, but to see that the rule is enforced. Of course, he has his intervals of relaxation at meal-times, when he may speak to his comrades on an equality, but during the greater part of the long twelve hours which he serves day by day he can only give necessary orders, and not dream of comment or suggestion. Besides this, there must be a considerable strain involved in the tireless vigilance exacted from all on duty. They are in charge of some of the cleverest and wiliest rogues in Christendom—men to whom a bit of bent wire is a distinct chance of escape from solid walls of masonry and doors with bars and bolts. A warder must note a gesture, observe the turn of a finger—always have his wits about him. He can never slip from under the load of responsibility.

The man who lives in these conditions undergoes a somewhat peculiar discipline, and it must be noted that he is not necessarily a particularly well educated man, but is chosen from the ordinary run of the men who drive omnibuses and cabs, who do the odd out-of-door work in great cities. The examination which every candidate for a wardership must pass only includes reading, writing, and working sums in simple addition and subtraction, things which every child of the present generation must know as a matter of course. Even less than this is sufficient to fit a man for the post of civil guard, night watchman, stoker, labourer, assistant mechanic, or assistant gasman in prisons; he must be able to read and write, and, so far as mental qualification goes, he is satisfactory.

The warder must be able to maintain strict discipline, to make himself respected, and, as a matter of course, hold himself entirely aloof from his charges. To an uneducated man there must be some difficulty in the situation: he must be firm without harshness; commanding—in fact an absolute autocrat, so long as no superior is by; and yet must abstain from that petty tyranny which possesses such a fatal fascination for those who have suddenly acquired unaccustomed power. The officer exacts absolute obedience from the prisoners, and must yield as absolute and uncompromising an obedience to those above him. Surely this is a somewhat difficult post to fill with perfection.

In the course of some inspection of prisons I have seen many warders, and carefully noted the different types of men. The rule is on the right side. The majority of the men seem to be alert, well behaved, pleasant fellows, nearly all with that keen glance seen on the faces of sailors who have been accustomed to keep watch, and possessing also a certain air of self-control and dignity which would make it unlikely for them to be habitual bullies. Of course, some notice is taken of the physical qualifications of the man for the post. It would be ludicrous for a weak, puny-chested little man to be in charge of a gang of prisoners at work. In the list of qualifications it is stated that candidates must be in good health, free from any bodily complaint, of sound constitution, and well developed physically. Among the reasons for rejection are noted weak or narrow chest, defective sight, stiffness of joints, or want of muscular strength, as well as absolute disease. Male warders must be not less than five feet six inches in height without shoes, and must be between twenty-four and forty-two years of age. Preference is given to those who have a good knowledge

of some trade likely to be useful. Rule No. 2 states that they must possess activity, intelligence, and good temper, three qualities more difficult to ascertain than those which can be tested by a cut-and-dried examination.

The pay is not great, but there are prospects of an increase. An assistant warder begins at £60 per annum, and receives in addition his uniform. This is a little over a pound a week. But then if any man through special intelligence or trustworthiness rises to the height of chief warder, his salary rises by four pounds a year to the dazzling height of £120 a year. London warders receive rather more than local ones, commencing at £65 instead of £60. That the service is popular is shown by the number of applicants, and also by the answers of men themselves when they are questioned. A female warder's position is a little different. Instead of receiving a house free, accommodation is found for her within the prison walls. This may seem a small matter, but it carries unpleasant consequences, for by the prison rules the great gates must be shut every night by ten, and there can be no more going out or coming in. The female capture of the latch-key is of no use here; a prison gate will not open for the most persuasive of latch-keys. Therefore, though the warder may have her time of relaxation, and may even occasionally get a day or two away altogether, by ten o'clock every night she is as much a prisoner as the longest-sentenced man among them all. In other matters, too, she is not so well treated as she might be. Her salary begins at £45 only, and though the matron may have as much as £150, as there are comparatively few matrons required, so there is an infinitesimal chance for any given female warder to attain this dignity.

Colonel Milman, Governor of Holloway and Newgate, expressed his anxiety to get a better class of women to undertake the duty. He spoke of the many refined women who are cast on their own resources, and are anxious to earn a livelihood, who might be warders, and also of the very beneficial effect this movement could not fail to have on the poor, wild, uneducated creatures who fill the prison cells; but there are great difficulties in the way. One is, of course, the miserably small stipend. No one brought up as a lady would care to live on £45 a year, even with house-room, three dresses per annum, and boots added to it. Very few could do it. Why, even the other civil servants, post-office clerks, etc., get more than this. Then there is also the question of association with the other warders—a difficulty which stands in the way of the much mooted lady-help question. Until the change was radical the pioneers would have a bad time of it. Again, lady-warders must be prepared to hear the foulest of foul language, such as those who know say only a woman can pour forth. But the supreme obstacle seems to be the want of bodily strength. It is true there is no ward work, no menial tasks, nor any lifting of heavy weights—these duties fall on the prisoners; but there is endless standing and walking about. "The officers always go in the feet and legs first," as the matron of the largest female prison-side in London said to me. The standing on the stone or concrete flooring all day long must be exceedingly trying. Yet this is, after all, little to what is demanded of hospital nurses, who crowd to fill the breaches without any pay at all. Surely the reformatory side of prison work would be as noble as nursing the sick. But this is somewhat of a digression. Female applicants must be between twenty-three and forty years of age, either single, or widows without young children, must be not less than five feet two inches without shoes. The other qualifications are the same as those required from the men.

Anxious to get an account of prison life from the inside as it appeared to one with long experience, I made an opportunity for a chat with one of the chief warders.

The man I approached was a stalwart, pleasant-looking fellow, with grey hair and beard, and an air of self-respect natural to one whose commands are habitually obeyed.

"Yes, I've been a warder for a long time," he said in answer to my first question. "Since 1854, and mostly at Wandsworth, though I've been in other prisons, too. Besides that I've been over nearly every prison in England. There's none comes up to Wandsworth," he added with a smile, "though, maybe, you'll think that's only natural partiality—everyone's partial to their own. Perhaps you've had some experience. What's your opinion?"

I declined to venture on so hazardous an enterprise, and tried to evade further pressure by the vague statement that some prisons excelled in one branch, and some in another.

"That's so," he assented cheerfully, "but for general all-round I take it we're the best. It's the healthiest spot in

England, and for cleanliness and general management——"

"Then you are quite satisfied with your life here?"

"Certainly, or why should I have stayed in it so long? Yes, here you're at a beautiful temperature all day, and in summer it's just as cool as it's warm in winter; no wet standing about, no chance of rheumatism."

"But there's a great deal of walking about, I fancy?"

"That's true; but you get used to it, and never feel it. Why, the prison here covers twenty-six acres of ground, and I go all round it every morning before breakfast."

This suggested a question as to the hours of work.

"Twelve in and twelve out," he answered with his good-humoured smile. "Come on at six in the morning, and go off at six at night."

It was between five and six then, and we stood in the great central hall and watched the trucks being wheeled round to the cell doors to deliver the evening meal of brown bread and gruel.

"Then the relief officers won't be long in coming on?" I said.

"No; and the vans will be coming in, too. We're a late receiving prison here—from six to nine at nights, and it makes a lot of work getting them all settled."

"And do you know how many you must make ready for each day?"

"No; I wish we did. The numbers vary, too. One day you may have fifty-three, and the next thirty-seven—as it happens."

"And who settles where they are to go?"

"Oh, I do all that," he answered with some pride. "That is, I say what cells are to be used."

"Then the routine of the life is pretty much the same day by day?"

"Very much. You must be always on the look-out—have eyes in your elbows, so to speak. But there isn't any hard work to do; the prisoners do all their own work, of course."

"Yet there must be exciting incidents sometimes—escapes or insubordinate prisoners?"

"Well, I'll tell you. I remember two escapes from here. Yes, you may think it isn't possible, but they were both owing to gross carelessness. The way was left open, and the men took it, that's all you can say. The first, an officer left a ladder he had been using about, and the prisoner put it against the wall and walked over it, and he wasn't caught either—at least, not for a long time, and then he was found at Reading when he was wanted for another offence. And he had some of our underclothes on him still. Extraordinary how careless some men will be about a little trifle like that, when in getting away they are as clever as can be. The other case was something similar, but perhaps a little cleverer on the prisoner's part. He put a stone in the keyhole of the shed where the ladder was kept, and, of course, when the officer wanted to put it away he couldn't open the door, and while he was fumbling at it the man planted the ladder right behind his back and climbed over."

"But of course he was caught, because the alarm would be given immediately."

"That's the odd thing; he *never was caught*, though he must have been close to where they were looking for him all along."

At this moment the sharp ting of a prisoner's bell sounded down the empty ward, and the officer in charge sprang up from his seat and looked along the wall on either side to see which metal disc was standing out at right angles, indicating from which cell the sound had come. He could not see it at first, and I had the privilege of pointing it out to him, far away in the end of the great misty ward.

"Number thirty-three, Sir," he called smartly to his superior officer as he marched off to answer the summons.

"It's depressingly silent here," I remarked.

"Humph! between eleven and twelve at night—that's the time; you might call it silent then," he answered rather contemptuously. "When the men are all asleep, why, if you flip your finger you can hear it from one end of the corridor to the other."

The food-trucks had long ago departed, but I only noticed and commented on the dispatch in dealing out the food now.

"Yes; we're proud of that," said the head warder. "Perhaps you won't believe it, but I tell you now; the dinner trucks come in at five minutes to twelve, and by twelve every man's served and shut in his cell, and there's a thousand of them, too! Discipline and method — that's what does it."

I reminded him that we had been discussing escapes.

"There's nothing more to say," he said, "about that. We've had no regular breaks out here either. We have them all well in hand now. The time for that sort

of thing was when they were trying to change the old associated system for the separate one; old hands didn't like it. We have plenty of them here. There's one man been in fifty times. For what? Oh! drunkenness and disorderly conduct. We try to keep the ones that haven't been here before by themselves — send them into the kitchen, and so on; and the old hands, why, we aren't so particular about them. There used to be women here once, and I've known some bad ones among them, worse than any of the men." His tone implied even more than his words. "But then there's good, too, of course. Now, black men, we get some of them in, and I must say I've always found them quiet, industrious, hard-working fellows. There are odd ones, too; we have a Chinaman in at present—can't speak a word of English, and, of course, it comes hard to teach them anything. But that's the way with all: some you can teach them anything, they only seem to want to be told to do it; and others are that stupid they're only fit for the crank."

"And aren't there any other duties for the warders besides merely overlooking?"

"Many of them. For one thing, we thoroughly search every man, strip him, and overhaul his cell once a week, to prevent any attempted escape; the little rub down they get on coming in from work is only a temporary kind of thing. Then there's the visiting-room. We'll go there."

We did, and as we stood in the space allotted to the warder, who must stand between two, visitor and prisoner, my informant's face suddenly softened. "Many's the tear I've had drawn from my eye in this room," he said. "It's heartrending to hear them go on sometimes. There was a young chap here, hadn't been married above a month or two, and he was a respectable young chap, too—a shopman or something; perhaps a small shopkeeper. He got in for stealing a shawl. He had a pretty long sentence, and when he had been in for a good while his wife had a baby, and was that pleased, and brought it to him to show, and he catches sight of her through the open door there, and puts his handkerchief over his eyes. 'No,' he says; 'I can't see it; I can't say as I saw my own child first in prison.' And she keeps begging and imploring him to look, for she was so proud of the little thing, and he just keeps on, 'No, I can't.' It was terrible to hear them. Yes, some of them that's not been in trouble before feels very bad about it; and then others, why, it would make you laugh to hear two thieves together."

"I suppose they're not allowed to talk any foreign language?"

"Well, that's the rule, of course; but yet there are some can't speak any other—that Chinaman I was speaking of, for instance. So we just have to let them, if their friends come."

"I was thinking rather of thieves' jargon."

He smiled. "Well, I'm ashamed to say it, but every warder who's been in the place a bit, why, he knows just as much of that as any man among them."

It seemed to me that I had not heard quite enough yet. I asked wherein lay the difference between the regular warders and the patrols and night watchmen.

"The ordinary warder," he said, "is one who has the charge of a certain number of prisoners in wards and cells, and who has the supervision over them; they are under his charge. But the night watchmen and patrols are those who have to patrol inside and outside of the prison during the night, and keep themselves well on the alert, and to see that all is safe and quiet during their hours of duty. They are visited during the night by the principal warder on duty at times unknown to them. They also have to peg the night clocks at stated periods—about every half or three-quarters of an hour, and this is to show that they have not gone to sleep. They are of a distinct rank, and receive the same rate of pay as assistant warders, and if any vacancy occurs in the assistant warders' ranks they make an application through the governor to the Commissioners of Prisons for day duties as assistant warders. They usually come on duty in the evening about eight p.m., and remain until six the following morning."

I thanked him for all he had told me, and, as it was getting late, left the prison. The old warder at the gate looked at me sympathetically. "I hope you have enjoyed yourself," he said as I passed out.

But the duties of warders in London prisons, where—if we except one hall at Wormwood Scrubbs, where convicts do "nine months solitary" before going on to regular convict establishments—there are no sentences over two years—are very different from those of the warders at Portland, Dartmoor, etc. It remained, therefore, to find someone who could tell me from actual experience what the life inside one of these great penal prisons was like.

"THE LITTLE RUB DOWN THEY GET ON COMING IN FROM WORK."

It was some time before I accomplished my desire, but at last I found a man who had been for six years warder at Portland, and was very willing to tell me all he knew.

"Well, it's very different from these City prisons," he began at once; "you're in charge of a different class of men altogether."

"Do you get better pay?"

"Yes; we begin at £70, and then we have our quarters, too—that's reckoned at £9 6s. a year—and uniform and boots and an outfit as well, tunic and so on. Then the rise is 30s. a year. The principal warder gets £120. The gatekeeper's reckoned a principal warder, and wears a principal warder's uniform, though he doesn't get so much pay; still, he gets more than an assistant warder."

"And do you begin work straight away when you reach the prison—have the keys and charge of a certain number of prisoners at once?"

"Oh, no; ye've three months' probation, when ye go about with a full warder, and ye don't have the keys; and then after that, if you're not satisfactory, they can send ye away. But if you're all right you get charge of so many men under you. How many? Well, the number varies. There were fifty-two in a ward at Portland, but then there might be two warders to them. I have been out in charge of seventy prisoners on the works, but that was not a common thing."

"All alone in charge of seventy?"

"Of course there's the civil guard all round; twenty-one posts there are for them. And if you miss a man, you must signal to the nearest one at once, and he holds up his rifle over his head" (he indicated a horizontal position) "to warn the others. It sends word all over, for each one is on a height up."

"I suppose you're obliged to count the men in your charge continually, to see that none are missing?"

"You must do that."

"If you could tell me I should like to hear one day's work right through, so as to get an idea of the life."

"I'm quite willing. I was at the prison for six years—between 1880 and 1886 it was—so anything I say refers to then, you understand. Of course there are some alterations now. One day we began work at five, and the next at seven in the morning. If it's seven ye get your breakfast before ye come in. On the early mornings ye go round first with two prisoners as orderlies, unlock the cell doors for the men to empty their slop-buckets and brush out their cells—only three at a time, mind, no more; then, when those were shut the next three, and so on all down the ward. At 6.20 breakfast was brought round, and we go then to get our own breakfast. Forty minutes allowed for that. Afterwards unlock all the cells and parade for chapel; after chapel, parade and fall in for labour. Well, I must tell you, too, that there's a slate fixed up with what orders there are for the day on it. They would change us it may be once a week. You might be put on the works or in the workshops, or as receiving officer for the day."

"One moment. Were you ever on night watch?"

"Not regularly. As assistant warder you have to take your turn at night watching. It comes about a fortnight in every three months—something like that—and very quiet it was at nights. Ye wear felt slippers, and can walk noiselessly."

"Yes, you were telling me about being out on the works."

"Yes. A bell used to ring, to give us time to get in. Ye had to be in by 11.10, and if ye were right out on the breakwater, it would sound, perhaps, about twenty minutes to the hour. So you got a fair start. Dinner was served 11.40., and out to work again at one. Work stopped at different hours, according to the season; 4.30 it was in winter, and 5.15 in summer. Supper the men had when they got in."

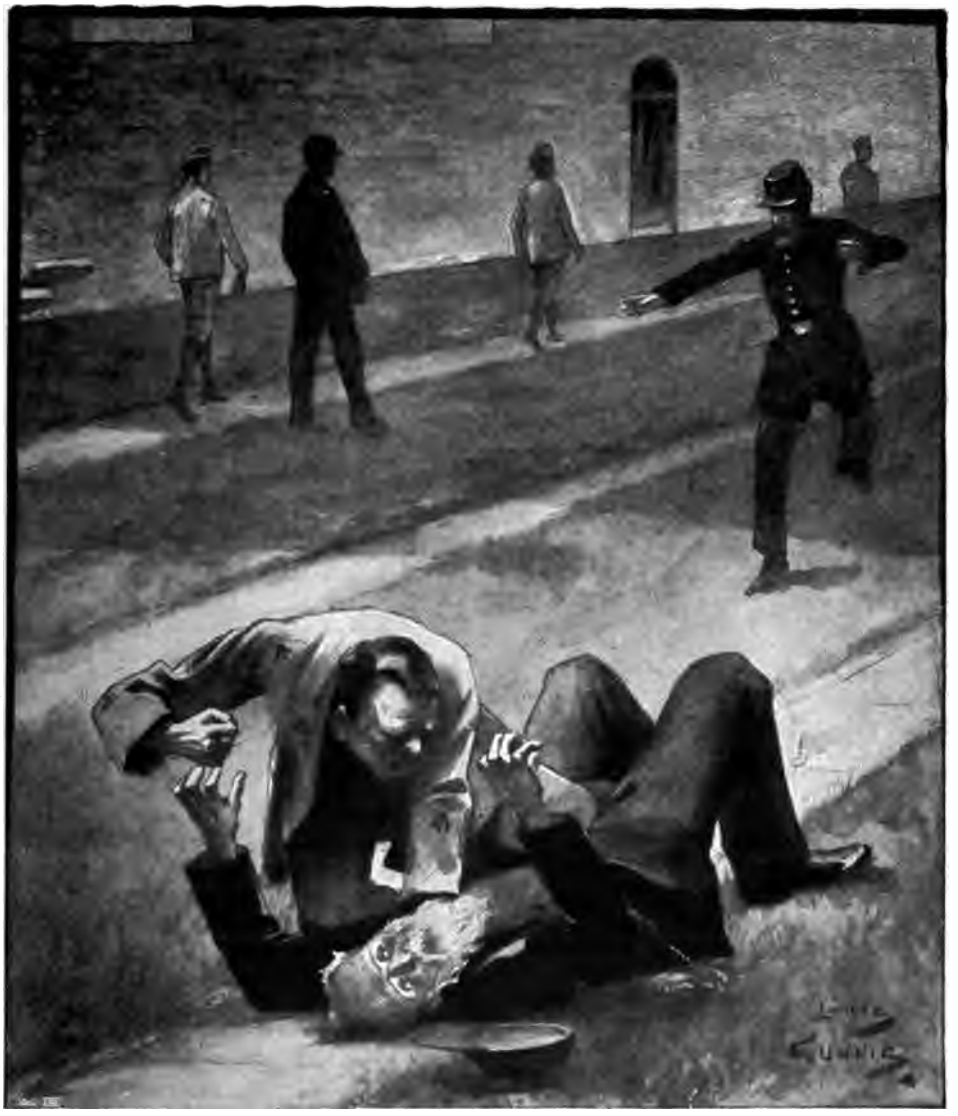
"You don't seem to have had a minute to spare."

"No; it was first one job, and then another. After that, there was cleaning the ward or scrubbing to be superintended, or the barber came round: there was always something."

"Did you have to stay in the ward and attend to the bells, as they do in London?"

"There weren't no bells. A man would shove his brush out under his door if he wanted anything. It was easy to see them, We that had come on at five in the morning had our long day and didn't get off till seven, and the others that had come on at seven in the morning they went off at six. There were 210 of us altogether, and the prison held 1620, counting punishment cells and all. Then, of course, we always had the civil guard to back us up, and, if more help was wanted, the governor had a telephone up to the Verne citadel, where there was always a picket ready. But then, ye see, we had some of the biggest scoundrels in England under our charge.

They was all searched, both going out and coming in, and ye would be astonished at the trafficking that went on in spite of it. They'd pick up a bit of steel—or p'r'aps it might be broken glass—and chew it to spit blood, and get into hospital. One fellow got away, when I was there, out of his cell and right down to the breakwater, but, to tell you the truth, it wasn't so clever, for the officer had forgotten to lock his door. Oh, he was caught again—it's impossible for them to get clear off there. After I left I heard that a fellow had escaped and found his way down to the harbour-master's boat, where he lived for three days, eating the victuals until the crew found him. They're very sharp, those fellows, that's why you have to be so particular on the works. The governor or deputy-governor'll visit you p'r'aps as many as six times in a day, and you've to report to him 'All correct.'"



"ONE CHAP KNOCKED ME CLEAN DOWN ONE DAY AND THEN COMMENCED PUMMELLING ME."

"I suppose the men on the works don't get any other exercise?"

"Not except on Sundays; then they have three hours out in the exercise-grounds altogether. You see they're bound to be in good training, though a man doesn't get put on the works unless the doctor allots him there. When they come to us from Wormwood Scrubbs they go through a medical exam., and if the doctor considers any man not fit for the hard work in the quarries he sends him to the tailor's shop maybe. I've been sorry sometimes though for young fellows, clerks in for forgery p'r'aps, who get put on the works. It's hard for them as aren't used to it. They begin work right away at once the first day they come if the doctor says they can do it."

"It must be a dull life for you, for you're not allowed to speak to the prisoners," I said.

"We're not supposed to," he said, with a meaning grin. "For that matter we're fined two-and-sixpence, even for speaking to a fellow officer on duty, but of course there are all sorts among the prisoners, and some of them are the nicest fellows. There was one, he had a most violent temper, otherwise he was the cleverest and best-working——"

I suggested that he knew the rules of the game, but my informant repudiated the notion with scorn.

"He had been in twice," he continued, "and this second term he was serving was for fourteen years. I don't remember what it was for. Anyway, while he was with us he caused the death of the best officer we had in the prison. This officer had never had anything to do with the man, either. So spite could have had nothing to do with it—it was pure temper. The prisoner was working at the lime-kilns, and the officer passed; so he picked up a bit of iron piping and struck him on the head with it. The officer, whose name was Evans, had to go into hospital. In the ordinary course, his assailant would have been handed over to the directors to deal with; but Evans objected, so he was tried by civil law, and got penal servitude for the term of his natural life. Evans was granted six years' remission of service, but he died, poor fellow! three months afterwards, from the effects of the blow. If he had died before the trial, the other fellow would have been hung."

"Is there much favouritism or bullying on the part of the warders?" I knew that I was questioning a prejudiced witness, but I wanted to hear what he would say.

"No, I don't think it. There was one man who used to make a report out every pay-day, so that he added ten or fifteen minutes on to his dinner-hour. When we made reports against the prisoners we never let them know who had done it. We had to give the report in, and the governor would summon the prisoner next day. When this warder that I'm speaking of took up his report, he had to wait perhaps some time before seeing the governor, and so came in to dinner late, and nobody took down the time he spent over it."

"Mean brute to get a man into trouble for the sake of a few extra minutes! How about punishments?"

"Oh, the usual thing. One chap, a little Dutchman, knocked me clean down one day and then commenced pummelling me, but there was only three days of his term to run, so he could only got bread-and-water for those three days."

"If there is a flogging have the warders to execute it?"

"No, that falls to the night watchman, for they don't have to come in contact with the prisoners, who might bear a grudge. They make a man pay for his own flogging, too," he added with a chuckle at the grim humour of the thing. "Every time a man is flogged, five shillings is stopped out of his gratuity, and given to the one as flogged him. The most they can earn," he continued, after a minute, "is six pounds, and that includes an extra pound for blue-dress; that's our best class men. We don't take any sentence under five years, and a five-years man can only earn three pounds."

"Got any more stories?"

"I could go on all day. There was one man who'd been a major in the army, Light Dragoons, and afterwards served in the Austrian army and married an Austrian lady. Well, a will which left some property in a way he didn't quite like came into this gentleman's hands, and he had altered it a bit, and so he came to us. I happened to be receiving officer the day he arrived, and I noticed him, and the next day I was on hospital duty, and found him there. 'Why, what's this—port-wine?' I said, for you see ye get more chance of talking in hospital than in the wards; and then he told me about himself. It was all true, I found out afterwards; he was a pleasant-spoken fellow, and many a long chat we had together after that."

His reminiscences I saw would run on unlimitedly, but as I judged I had already got as much matter as would fill many pages of *The English Illustrated*, I thanked him for his information and withdrew.

ENGINE 13 had been designed by a genius who was called a crank. He was the inventor of some of the most useful tools and appliances in use in the shops; he was an enthusiast. If he had not been his design would never have been accepted by the superintendent of motive power and machinery. He claimed that his new locomotive would steam better, pull harder, and run faster than any engine on the K.P. She was so constructed that she could run farther on a tank of water, the enthusiast said, than an ordinary locomotive would run on two; and that was good, for water was scarce on the plains. She had patent lubricators and balanced valves—new inventions at that time — and, being fresh - painted and handsome, she was regarded as a good "catch" by the engineers of the Smoky Hill division. The genius who designed her had been sent East to the locomotive works to superintend her construction; and, long before the engine was completed, the mechanics employed upon her had arrived at the conclusion that the Western engineer was as crazy as a jack-snipe.

As the locomotive neared completion the enthusiasm of her designer increased. A quiet, undemonstrative enthusiasm it was, that seemed to possess the soul of the inventor and to fill his life with all that he needed. Upon her growing skeleton he worked himself weary, and then rested himself in quiet contemplation of his ideal engine; and finally, when the wheels were placed beneath her frame, he began to see her as she should appear when completed. One morning, when the workmen came, they found Hansen's bed in the engine-tank. From that day forward he worked about her by day, and slept, if he slept at all, upon her at night.

Oscar Hansen, a Dane, had yellow hair and a very poor stand of clay-coloured whiskers. Like writing and painting geniuses, he allowed his hair and beard to grow and blow as it would, and the result was that he was about as unhandsome

a man as one would meet in a lifetime. All this was nothing to Hansen. He lived in his work, and believed that in time he would run away from Stephenson, Franklin, and all the rest.

When the 13 arrived at Kansas City, Hansen was with her, and he remained with her day and night, until she was taken out to be limbered up for her trial trip. He insisted upon handling her himself, and would not allow the locomotive engineer to touch the throttle until the master mechanic came to him personally and remonstrated. It was evident from the very first that the engine was not right, and the engineer told Hansen so at the close of the first day with her. Hansen became so angry that he threatened to kill the engineer if he ever dared to repeat what he had said. Every day for nearly a week the new engine was raced around the yards, and never for a moment did Hansen leave her. His wild hair became wilder, his deep eyes sank deeper into his head, and his thin, white face became almost horrible to see. At the end of a week it was decided to put the 13 on the Denver express for her trial trip, and Hansen surprised the master mechanic by *asking to* be allowed to run her.

UPON HER GROWING SKELETON HE WORKED HIMSELF WEARY.

"But you are not a locomotive engineer," urged the official, "and I couldn't think of allowing you to handle the engine. You may go with her, if you wish, but the engineer must have full control of the locomotive."

Hansen went sullenly out, and climbed up into the cab. When the conductor came with the orders, he glanced into the cab and asked—

"Who's his whiskers?"

"That fellow with the tired look and troubled tresses," answered the engineer, "is the idiot who designed this machine."

Hansen had, by insisting upon running the new locomotive himself, incurred the displeasure of every engineer on the road, and as this remark was meant for him to hear, he heard it. When the conductor left the engine, Hansen crossed over to the driver's side and said: "If you don't make time to-day I'll run her myself, and I'll send you where you won't want a fireman."

The driver only laughed, for the sanity of the inventor had been a debatable question ever since his return with the new engine.

The train to which the 13 was coupled was a heavy one, for Colorado was at that time just beginning to "boom." In the first run, of seven miles, they lost five minutes, but Hansen was too much taken up with watching his machine to take note of the time. Her boiler was foaming, as new boilers usually do; her main pins were hot, and so was her engineer. The first stop was at a small town, and when the conductor gave the signal to go the engineer was still on the ground pouring tallow on the pins. Hansen became frantic at what, to him, seemed unnecessary delay, and, springing to the driver's side, he pulled the throttle wide open without releasing the air-breaks. The engine lurched forward, and when the slack was gone, her wheels began to revolve at a frightful rate. The engineer sprang into the cab, and found Hansen working frantically in a vain effort to shut off steam, and concluded at a glance that the throttle had been left partly open, and that the high pressure of

steam had forced it out. Now, when the engineer, fireman, and Hansen all seized the lever to force the throttle in, they sprung the stem, and the thing could not be closed. The engineer released the air with the hope that the train might be started, and in that way the engine could be cooled down without doing any great damage. But the wheels were now revolving at such a rate that the engine had no adhesive power, and the train stood still. Five, ten, fifteen seconds went by, and still the three men worked, each in another's way, trying to shut off steam. A solid stream of fire was rolling out of the stack, and such sprays of sparks came from the drivers that they looked like living flames.

Pushing Hansen and the fireman out of his way, the engineer opened both injectors; and what with the cold water going in and the fire going out, the mad machine cooled rapidly, and in a few moments ground harshly and came to a stop. It was found, upon examination, that the drivers had dug great holes in the steel rails, and that the tyres on the back pair of driving-wheels, already well heated by the furnace, had loosened by expansion and slipped nearly off the wheels. In a little while the throttle was cooled and closed, and a fresh fire was made; but when they gave the engine steam she refused to move. She was uncoupled, and still refused to go; and then they saw that her tyres had cooled and clasped the fire-box, and the fire-box, expanding, held them there and locked the wheels.

"THE IDIOT WHO DESIGNED THIS MACHINE."

When they had put out her fire, the wheels let loose, so that a yard-engine could draw her back to the round-house. All the way her scarred wheels ground and ground against her frame, while Hansen sat in the tank with his thin yellow whiskers full of coal-dust, and nobody but he knew that he had opened the throttle.

During the weeks that followed, while the 13 was being repaired, having her tyres turned down to remove the slivers of steel, and getting reset and repainted, Hansen never left her for a single hour. His condition became so pitiable that the engineers, who had at first looked upon him with contempt, now spoke kindly to him or gave him no attention at all. He rarely ever washed now; his yellow beard was dark with coal-dust, and his death-hued face was splotched with soot and black oil. By the time the 13 was ready for the road, Hansen was almost ready for an undertaker; and when the master mechanic saw him, he gave orders that the inventor must not be allowed to go out on the engine, which was to take out the fast freight, a night run of some importance.

Hansen had hoped, even boasted, that the 13 should never be coupled into anything plainer than a mail car, and now when he learned that she was going out on a freight run he was frantic. Formerly he had insisted upon running the engine

only: now he wanted to run the road. When the foreman told him, as kindly as he could, that no one would be allowed in the cab of the 13 except the engineer and the fireman, the inventor glared fiercely for a moment, then turned and entered the office of the master mechanic. He did not wait to be ushered in, but strode to the chief's desk, and informed the head of the motive power department that engine 13 would not go out on freight; that when she did go out she would pull a passenger train, and that he, Hansen, would be the engineer.

The master mechanic was forced to be firm with the man, who up to now he had avoided or humoured; and he told him plainly that the orders given concerning the new engine would certainly be carried out, and that if he became too troublesome he would be locked up. Hansen raved like a madman, and all the clerks in the office were unable to seize and hold him. "She is my life!" he shrieked. "I have put my soul into her, and I will never allow her to go out of my sight; you will be guilty of murder if you separate us!"

As the mad inventor fought he frothed at the mouth, and the perspiration that almost streamed from his forehead washed white furrows down his face. It was not until the special officer came with handcuffs that Hansen could be controlled; and as the 13 rolled slowly across the turntable he was led away to the lock-up. He became perfectly quiet now, and when they reached the "Cooler," as it was called, the officer removed the handcuffs and turned to unlock the door. Hansen, taking advantage of this opportunity, turned quickly and bolted, and was many yards away before the officer, rattling away at the padlock, knew that his prisoner had escaped.

The officer very naturally supposed that Hansen would return to the shops, but he did not. He made straight for the freight-yards, where the 13 stood steaming, all coupled up and ready to pull out on her night run over the plains. The engineer had finished oiling, and had gone into the little telegraph office where the conductor was getting orders. The fireman, who was in the cab looking after the engine, saw Hansen come leaping over the strings of flat and coal cars, with his beard sweeping round his neck and his yellow hair blown back from his bare head. As the inventor sprang upon the engine the fireman seized him, only to be hurled out over the coal-tank by the desperate Dane. Having freed *himself from* the fireman, Hansen gave two sharp blasts — "off brakes" — and opened the throttle. The sudden jerk broke the train in two, four cars from the engine; and before the astonished engineer could reach the head-end the engine was in motion. The mad driver knew enough to open the sand-lever, and with a few exhausts the short train was moving so fast that the trainmen were unable to reach it. Out over the switches, already set for the fast freight, and down the main line dashed the wild driver, while a flood of fire came from the stack and rained upon the roofs of cars and switch-shanties along the line. Flagmen coming out at crossings to cheer the fast freight with a white signal of "All right," saw the grim face of Hansen leaning from the cab; saw his white teeth shining and his yellow hair streaming back over his shoulders as the engine dashed by. Farmers along the line saw a great shower of sparks falling in their fields, and in her wake the wild engine left a sea of burning stubble where red flames leaped from shock to rick.

When the fireman, dazed and stunned, had been picked up and revived, he told them what had happened, and a dispatch was sent to the first station out to "ditch" the 13, which had broken loose from her train and was running wild. This station was the meeting-point for the fast freight and the incoming express, and if the wild engine was allowed to pass she must surely collide with the passenger-train. The operator who was on duty looking out for these two important trains realised the situation at a glance, and opened the switch at the farther end of the siding to allow the 13 to go into the ditch beyond the dépôt.

Because it was a junction point, the station was located at the foot of a long slope, down which Hansen drove at a frightful rate. Whatever of speed he had lost by losing fire and wasting steam he now regained on the downward grade. So great was the speed of the train that when the engine struck the first switch she left the track and plunged into the dépôt, carrying the four loaded cars with her. The fourth car contained giant powder for the miners in the mountains, and this now exploded with terrific force. The agent and his assistant had stationed themselves near the other switch to witness the performance of the wild engine when she should leave the rail, and so escaped death. Hansen's escape was almost miraculous. The engine, in turning over, threw him upon the roof of the low station; the roof was blown away by the explosion, and

Hansen was carried out into the prairie. The special engine and crew that followed upon her blazing trail found the 13 buried in the burning station, and Hansen lying unconscious upon the star-lit plain.

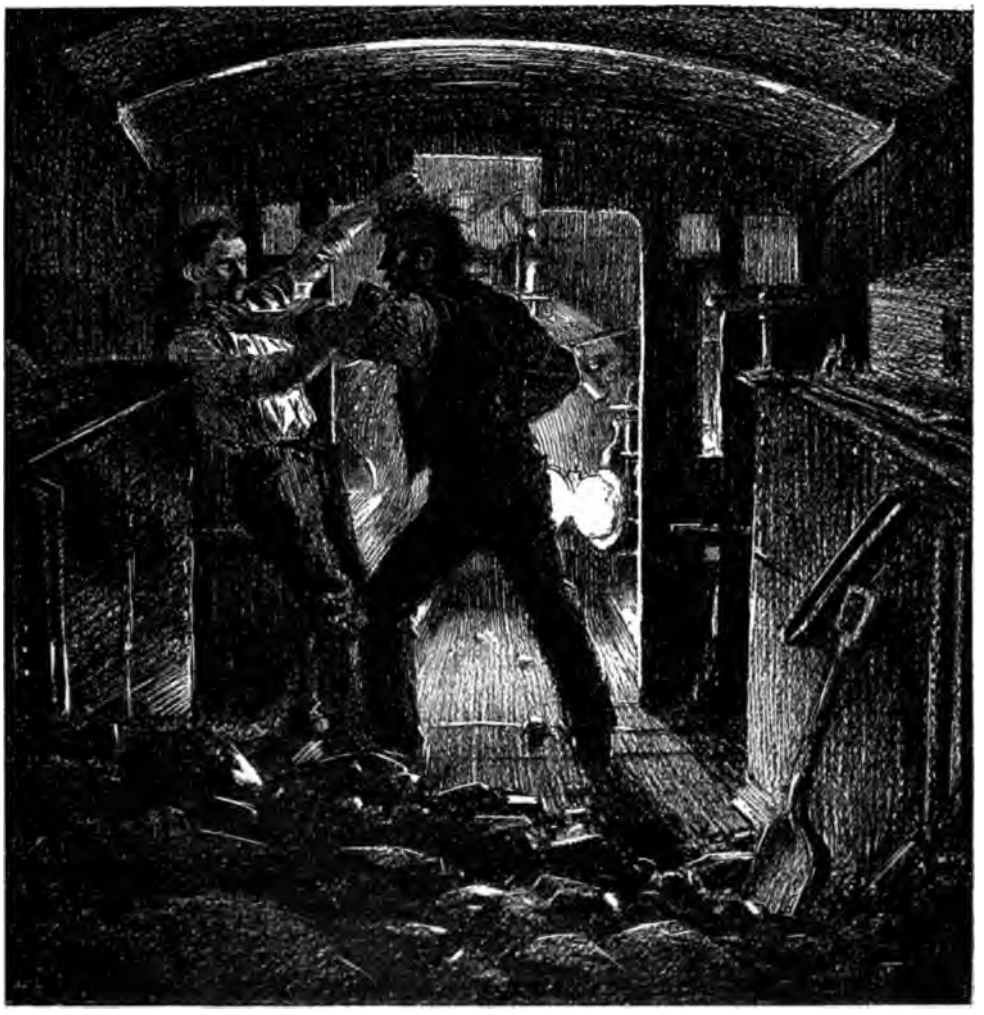
The blackened fields had been ploughed and prepared for another crop, the station was being rebuilt, and the company's claim agent was busy settling with the farmers along the line, before Hansen was able to walk out in the garden back of the company's hospital. It seemed to him, he said, that he had been ill all his life, and that all he knew was the short life he had lived in the hospital. Back of that all was a blank, save that he had a faint notion that he had lived before, and that the world out of which he had come was made up of one great sorrow from which he had narrowly escaped.

"Is that my name?" he asked of the attendant one day when his reason had returned.

"Sure," said the nurse, "your name vas Oscar. Don't you know your own name?"

"Oh, yes," said the patient wearily, "I had forgotten. What's my other name—Oscar what?"

The attendant was about to reply when the surgeon, entering, gave sign for the man to be quiet. "Restless," said the doctor, taking the patient's hand, and the sick man caught at the word, the meaning



AS THE INVENTOR SPRANG UPON THE ENGINE, THE FIREMAN SEIZED HIM.

of which his wreck of a mind scarcely comprehended, and repeated: "Reslis—Oscar Reslis — that's a nice-sounding name."

"Yes," said the surgeon, deciding to let it go at that, "Oscar Reslis is a very pretty name."

The physical condition of the patient improved rapidly enough now, but his mental condition continued to puzzle the chief surgeon and his staff. He was quiet enough and seemed anxious to be alone—away from the other patients and the attendants. He would sit for hours thinking, thinking hard and long upon the great problem of life, and trying to make out how he came to be. The attendants had been instructed to keep a close watch upon the sick man, and this, as his reasoning powers returned, Hansen detected.

"Why do you follow me all the while?" he asked of his German keeper one day when the latter had trailed him down in the garden.

"To see so dot you none skedattle—flew der coop—see? Dat vas it."

"Tell me, Fritz," Hansen pleaded, "where did I live before I came here?"

"Oh, ho!" exclaimed the German, "you dink I vas one fool? Der doc. tell me I shall not speak mit you about your past life. He say I must jus' say nix, und blay as I don't lisen, see?"

"Then tell me why they brought me here."

"Oh! I mus' nit, I mus' nit speak mit you about your sickness, der doc. sais; because, he say, it will make you nut fly off. You see it is nit goot for you to know so much, because you been wronk in the cope—see? Dot vas it. Doc. sais you must not told a man vat is crazy dot he been crazy, for dot makes him sometimes still more crazy yet again already. Dot is it. So I vill not say anoder veard from you."

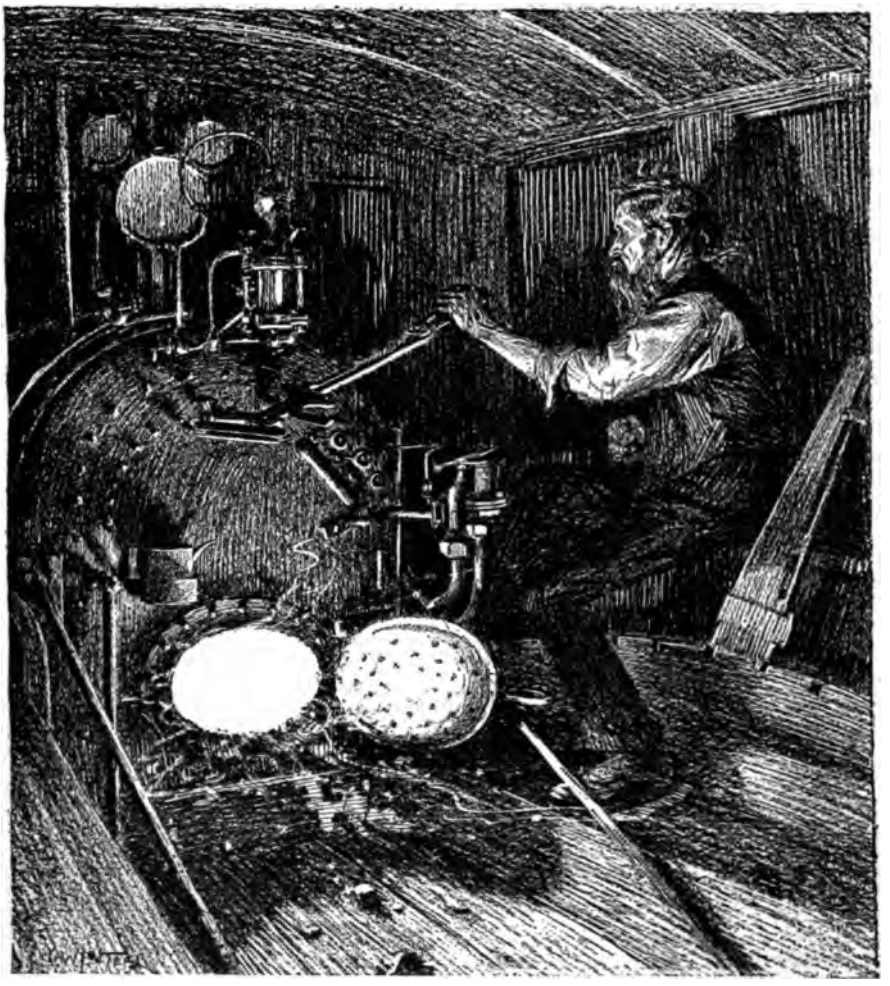
Oscar thought a great deal over his conversation with Fritz, and as the days went by he began to realise that he was a prisoner, that he had been a prisoner once before, either in this world or the other, that he had escaped, and he must escape again. All his time was now occupied in forming plans by which he might free himself from his captors, who had no right, according to his way of reasoning, to hold him.

One night when Fritz was asleep, Oscar dressed himself, slid down the rainspout, and reached the garden. By the help of some grape-vines that grew there he was able to scale the wall; and once free, he ran away with all his might, not caring where his legs carried him so they bore him away from his prison. It happened that as he reached the yard a freight-train was pulling out, and seeing that it was leaving the town, he boarded it and rode away. Upon some flat cars in this train there were a number of narrow-gauge locomotives going out to a mountain road then being built in the new West, and in the fire-box of one of these engines Hansen hid. The train had been out three days, and was almost in sight of the Rocky Mountains, when Hansen was forced by hunger from his hiding-place. He was put off at an eating-station, and the boarding boss took care of him. He said his name was Oscar Reslis; and when he was strong enough to work he was put into the kitchen as dish-washer. But being sober and industrious, he was soon promoted to be second cook. At the end of the year, when the cook got drunk and lost his place, Oscar was made chief cook at one of the best known eating-houses on the K.P. He was a little queer in his actions, but they all attributed his eccentricities to his long fast in the fire-box of the dead engine, and treated him with greater consideration than he would otherwise have received.

When they had hammered the kinks out of her warped and twisted frame, and smoothed the dents out of her boiler, the luckless locomotive was rebuilt, painted, and rolled out over the turntable with the same unlucky number on her headlight. Nobody wanted her now. New and beautiful as she was, not an engineer asked to be allowed to run her. After she had been broken in again, and the travelling engineer had passed upon her fitness for the road, she was ordered out on local freight. She had no serious trouble for some months, but any number of minor accidents were charged up to her in the conductor's delay reports, and the work-book in the round-house was written full of her troubles. At the end of the year it was found that she had burned more coal, used more oil, had more repairs, cost more money, made less mileage, and injured more people than any engine on the Smoky-Hill division. She was placed in the hands of one of the most experienced engineers, but she made the same bad record, if not a worse one; and neither engineer nor master mechanic was able to put a hand upon her and say, "Here she is wrong." Her trouble could not be located, and most of the men gave it up,

declaring that Hansen had "hoo-dood" her. One day her throttle flew open and stuck, as it had upon her first trip, causing her to run away, kill her engineer, and injure a number of trainmen. After that she was put upon a construction train, and made to drag outfit-cars from station to station along the line. But even here she had to be followed up by a machine-shop to keep her on her wheels.

In time she came to be the talk of the whole system. If a man had a special or a fast freight behind him, he would invariably ask the dispatcher where the 13 was, and he looked for her at every curve until he had found and passed her. She was always due to jump the track or lie down between stations in the face of the fast express. She became so notoriously unlucky that men were hardly held responsible for her capers. Wrecks that would have cost the driver of another engine ten days were not reported; and even serious accidents her engineer was not called upon to explain. So long as she remained at the other end of the line, the master mechanic was satisfied. She was a "hoo-doo."



THE MAD DRIVER KNEW ENOUGH TO OPEN THE SAND LEVER.

Meanwhile, Oscar Reslis had become an expert cook, and had many friends at the little Western town that was a flag-station when he stopped there to break his long fast. His mind seemed clearer, but he was less cheerful. A settled melancholy seemed fixed upon him, which none of his associates were able to understand. He

believed in the transmigration of souls. Where he had lived, he said, he had been deeply wronged and persecuted. He had passed through a great sorrow, and to his acquaintances it seemed that he had been purified by pain. He lived such a simple, sinless life that those about him believed in him and in the faith he held, and in time he had a number of converts to what they called the "Reslis religion." He was constantly preaching. "Strive hard, strive hard," he would say to those about him. "Remember that all the good you do in this life will count for you in the life to come. The more you suffer here the more you will enjoy there: be patient!"

One sultry summer day, when all the helps were complaining of the heat in the kitchen, the patient cook surprised them by beginning to sing as he went about his work—a thing he had never done before.

"I think I shall go away soon," he said, when the second cook asked the cause of his apparent happiness.

"Where? Oh, that I do not know; but to a better place than this, I hope. Not that this is a bad world; but we must advance—go on and up, up and on, until we reach the perfect life."

Suddenly there came through the open windows two shrill blasts of a locomotive-whistle, and instantly Hansen's face grew joyously bright.

"There she is! There she is!" he cried, bounding out of the kitchen and clearing the back fence at a single leap; and now he beheld the old 13 just pulling out with three or four outfit-cars and an old ricketty caboose behind her. She was so covered with alkali dust and grease that her number could not be seen; but he had heard her voice and knew her. The fireman was busy at the furnace, the engineer was looking back to see that the yardmen closed the switch behind him; and so the cook climbed into the cab unobserved. When the fireman came out of the coal tank and found the man there, he concluded that the engineer had given him permission to ride; and when the engineer looked over and saw the fireman fixing a seat for the "dead-head," he thought the two men must be friends, and, as few people ever came into the cab, he was rather pleased to find a man reckless enough to ride the 13.

The Dane's face told plainly how glad he was to find the lost idol of his heart. Dirty, disgraced—almost despised—drudging along in front of her wretched train of ricketty, dust-covered cars, she was still beautiful to him.

The engineer was doing the best he could with the old scrap-heap, for there was a passenger-train coming from the West, and the first siding was nearly ten miles away. It had been raining down the line the night before, and the parched plain was fresh and cool. Both the engineer and the fireman were much interested in the bareheaded passenger, who seemed about as happy as a man can get and live. He took note of every move made by the engineer, smiling when the engine blew off steam, and frowning when the driver handled the throttle or lever in a rough or careless manner.

"Guess this is your first ride on a locomotive, eh?" asked the driver.

"My first ride?" cried Hansen. "Don't you know me? I made this engine, and they took her from me, and locked me up in a prison; but I shall never leave her again. I shall scour her jacket, polish her bell, repaint her, and she shall pull the Denver Express."

"If I don't b'l'eve it's the crazy Dane," said the engineer. "Where'd you git 'im?"

"I didn't git 'im at all," said the fireman. "Where'd you git 'im?"

"Is that what they call me over there—back there where we used to live?" asked Hansen almost pathetically.

The engineer made no reply; the fireman shook the grates, and looked out over the plain, where the scant grass, taking courage from the recent rain, made a feeble effort to look green and cheerful.

"Open her up," shouted Hansen. "Don't be afraid of her. We shall push right on to the end of the run—until we find a round-house and some tools, and then we will rebuild her. How handsome she will look when she comes out! We will paint her black this time—all black—all but her bell, and that shall shine like burnished gold. Black will become us now, for we have passed through great trials since our separation. How they have abused you, my noble steed," continued the man, glancing along the boiler and up at the stack.

The engine began to roll and plunge fearfully now, and the driver, looking out, saw that the rain had been very heavy, and that the track was almost unsafe. But he dared not slow down because of his close meeting-point with the East-bound express. Instead of being frightened at the capers of the rolling, plunging engine, the Dane seemed delighted, and leaned far

out on the fireman's side, and shouted and laughed as the world went by. Although the track was clear and straight, the driver kept a constant look-out, for he had no air, and from the way the train was rolling it would be difficult for the trainmen to get to the brakes, and when they did get to them they were apt to be out of repair. Occasionally they crossed deep, narrow gullies on wooden bridges that shook as the engine struck them. These waterless streams in the West are treacherous; it is not enough to say that they are dry one hour and bank-full the next, for they will often fill to overflowing in a single minute. The water at times will roll down in a solid wall, ten or twelve feet high. There had been a cloud-burst here, and suddenly the driver saw the sagging rails hanging over a deep ravine. The bridge was gone, and there was no possible chance for them. "Jump!" he shouted, and the fireman leaped out into the prairie, and the engine plunged head first into the stream, now almost dry. The three or four outfit cars piled in on top of the engine and filled up the gap, while the caboose, breaking her coupling, leaped over the wreck, and was thrown out on the plain beyond the wash-out.

When the fireman had pulled himself together and the conductor and brakemen had crawled from the wrecked caboose, bruised and bleeding, they went in search of the engineer and the crazy Dane. What they found and failed to find is well known to thousands of railroad men. It has become a part of the history of the road and of the West. There, in the bed of the narrow stream, they found the outfit cars all in a heap. The stream, only eight or ten inches of clear water, was rippling through and around the wreck; but the locomotive was gone, and so was her driver, and so was the Dane. The men stared at one another, and when the firemen told them that the crazy inventor was on the engine they were seized with a strange terror, and they all turned and scrambled up the bank. Far down the plain they saw the smoke of a locomotive, and they thought that the crazy Dane must have caused the 13 to leap over the wash-out. It must be so, for the engine had disappeared, and this discovery served only to increase their bewilderment.

Presently the conductor thought of his running orders, and of the East-bound express which they were running to meet at the siding only a mile beyond the wash-out, and, securing a soiled flag from the old caboose, he ran with all his might to meet and flag the approaching train. The arrival of the express explained away the smoke they had seen, and made it plain to the crew of the work-train that their engine had not escaped, but that she was somewhere in the quicksand of the little stream. It was some time before the crew and the passengers of the express could bring themselves to believe the story told by the bewildered freight-crew. They went down into the stream, waded into the water, and found the sand firm enough to hold a man up, and some of the passengers said the men were crazy, and would not believe the tale they told. What wonder, then, if these men who were there only a few minutes after the wreck doubted this story, that men laugh to-day when the enterprising newsboy points out the place where the engine went down and disappeared in the sand?

The railway officials, however, did not doubt the story, and they came and dug and drifted, prospected and ploughed around in the desert sands all night and all the next day. After the bridge had been rebuilt they went at it in earnest. For days and weeks and months they worked away, digging and sounding in the sand, and when thousands of dollars had been expended they gave it up. The lost locomotive has never been found.*

It must be nearly twenty years now since the thing occurred, and it has been almost forgotten, but—

Away deep down in the earth somewhere,
If the engine could be seen,
The driver stands at the throttle there,
And the mad Dane sits with a stony stare
In the cab of the old Thirteen.

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* The following letters, recently received by the author, will be of interest to the reader—

Office of the General Superintendent,
UNION PACIFIC RAILWAY COMPANY.
DENVER, COLORADO, *March* 1, 1896.

CY WARMAN, Esq.,
Washington, D. C.

The lost locomotive of which you inquire went down in Sand Creek, a few hours' run east of Denver, and although thousands of dollars have been expended by the company, the engine has never been found.

Respectfully yours,
W. A. DEUEL.
General Supt., U. P. Ry.

THE DENVER AND RIO GRANDE RAILROAD COMPANY.
(Treasury Department.)
DENVER, COLORADO, *March* 21, 1896.

MR. CY WARMAN,
Washington, D. C.

My dear Cy,—I remember the story of the engine going down in Sand Creek; and, so far as I know, it has never been recovered.

With best wishes, I am, hastily, sincerely yours,
J. W. GILLULY,
Treasurer of the D. & R. G. RR.

Photo by Kelley, Newton Abbot.

LADY BAKER.

LADY BAKER IN THE SOUDAN.

By HERBERT WARD.

THE honour of being the most famous heroine of travel rests with Lady Baker, the widow and former comrade of the late Sir Samuel Baker. As the companion and helpmeet of her distinguished husband during his explorations of the Nile sources and during his expedition to Central Africa for the suppression of the slave-trade, Lady Baker's name will always be cherished and honoured. Of the generation of great African explorers, Livingstone, Burton, Speke, Baker, and Grant, who worked contemporaneously in different parts of the continent, and who wrought such remarkable changes in the map of Central Africa, there is now but Lady Baker amongst us as the surviving link of that gallant band.

Within the last fifty years the continent of Africa has been geographically dissected from every point; the division of its territories has raised burning questions between European nations, and the task of defining spheres of influence has long been a vital subject in the range of modern politics. The blank spaces which appeared in the African map of forty or fifty years ago, as representing unexplored areas, have now been covered with a wealth of important river, lake, and mountain systems, and with a maze of geographical features of every description. This great work, which does honour to our age, has been performed in a measure by the late Sir Samuel Baker and his great contemporaries.

To appreciate the extent of Lady Baker's share in the work of African exploration we must perforce turn to the records which were penned by her husband and leader. Therein we continually meet with mention of her courageous conduct, admirable forethought, presence of mind, and invaluable services. The perusal of Sir Samuel Baker's books of travel reveals, in fact, a truly remarkable account of a noble woman's fortitude and endurance during upwards of nine years of arduous campaigning in Central Africa. The trials borne by Lady Baker in traversing unknown regions which bristled with dangers of every description will ever remain as a brilliant example to future generations of what can be endured by a brave woman.

In 1860 Sir Samuel Baker married Florence, the daughter of a Hungarian gentleman, M. Finnian von Sass, and in the early part of 1861 Sir Samuel and Lady Baker set out upon their great expedition to discover the sources of the Nile. Hitherto every attempt to reach the Nile source had been in vain, and the spirit in which this new effort was undertaken is best shown by Sir Samuel Baker's own words: "I could not conceive that anything in this world had power to resist a determined will so long as health and life remained." By June of the same year the travellers reached Khartoum, where six weary months were passed waiting for the rains to cease. The difficulties experienced in starting from Khartoum with ninety-six followers, for the most part ruffians and cut-throats, and the subsequent dreary passage through the marsh lands of the Nuer country to Gondokoro, where the expedition met with a hostile reception from the traders in ivory and slaves, would in themselves have been sufficient to dishearten many a less courageous man. It was during their enforced stay at Gondokoro that we obtain the account of the first of the many invaluable services rendered by Lady Baker. The slave-traders of Gondokoro completely demoralised the men of the expedition, until one day they broke into open mutiny. Sir Samuel Baker promptly seized the ringleader, whereupon his men rushed upon him from all sides, and had it not been for Lady Baker pluckily running forward, although suffering from fever at the time, and calling upon the least mutinous to assist her, her husband's life would probably have been lost. It was soon after this incident that Speke and Grant arrived at Gondokoro on their way home, after having discovered the Victoria Nyanza and explored its western shores. Although the direct result of their explorations in search of the Nile sources was to an extent based upon

information received from witnesses, Speke and Grant had accomplished a great journey, and they were able to supply Sir Samuel Baker with valuable information which greatly aided him in his subsequent expedition. With a view to supplement and complete the explorations of Speke and Grant and to discover the location of the mysterious lake Muta Nzige, Sir Samuel Baker, his wife and party, started from Gondokoro by land in March 1863, the route being first eastward, then nearly south, then trending towards the west. The difficulties and dangers that had hitherto beset the expedition were far exceeded by those encountered after leaving Gondokoro. Mohammed, a slave-trader who had escorted Speke and Grant into Gondokoro, and who was engaged to escort Baker's expedition southward, plotted to deceive him and to prevent him from marching. The men of the expedition became mutinous, and deliberately planned to rob and murder both Sir Samuel and Lady Baker. It was only by dint of exercising extraordinary patience and an iron will that the party was subsequently able to leave Gondokoro. Following a party of slave-traders, they eventually, by the ready tact of Lady Baker, attached themselves to the column. This arrangement served well until they met a rival band of slave-traders, when fresh obstacles beset their path. Again the men of the expedition mutinied and refused to march further. The explorers then attached themselves to the rival slave-traders, with whom they travelled safely to Tarrangollé. Soon after their arrival, they learned of the annihilation, by natives, of the slave-traders with whom they had so recently journeyed from Gondokoro. The first opportunity was naturally taken to escape from their embarrassing partnership with the slave-traders, and the next union was with the natives of Obbo, who behaved in a most friendly manner to the expedition. By reason of the mutiny, which left the expedition without a sufficient number of men to enable them to act independently, and by reason of the severe sufferings of both Sir Samuel and Lady Baker from malarial fever, many months were spent in Obbo. From the rascally slave-traders the expedition subsequently passed into the power of the arbitrary native chief Kamrasi. By this time the condition of the expedition became one of abject misery. The few remaining men deserted; reduced by fever, without medicine, clothes, or supplies, the two unhappy Europeans were in a pitiable *plight. The capricious* Kamrasi at length, moved by the prospect of gain, promised to supply a chief and a guide to conduct them to their destination, the Lake Muta Nzige, or "M'wootan N'zige," described by Speke, who had previously obtained rough particulars of its location from native accounts. Delays, so sadly common in the experience of all African travellers, prevented the start being made at the stipulated time. Kamrasi raised objections to the number and quality of presents he had received, and his rapacity seemed at one time to threaten doom to the fulfilment of his original promise of aid. To cap his exorbitant requirements, he suddenly demanded no less a consideration than Lady Baker herself. Astonished, and somewhat abashed, at Lady Baker's violent indignation, the native chief did not enforce the claim, and seeing little chance of obtaining any additional presents, he subsequently ordered his people to accompany the expedition. The native escort proved wild and quite unmanageable; although both Sir Samuel and Lady Baker were still suffering from fever, they were obliged to march during the hottest hours of the day, their followers never being ready to start at an early hour. Having upon one occasion to wade across a treacherous marsh, Lady Baker was suddenly afflicted with sun-stroke. The calamity is thus described by her husband in his record of the journey, contained in his book, "The Albert Nyanza"—

"I had scarcely completed a fourth of the distance, and looked back to see if my wife followed close to me, when I was horrified to see her standing in one spot, and sinking gradually through the weeds, while her face was distorted and perfectly purple. Almost as soon as I perceived her, she fell, as though shot dead. In an instant I was by her side, and with the assistance of eight or ten of my men, who were, fortunately, close to me, I dragged her like a corpse through the yielding vegetation, and up to our waists we scrambled across to the other side, just keeping her head above water; to have carried her would have been impossible, as we should all have sunk together through the weeds. I laid her under a tree and bathed her head and face with water, as for the moment I thought she had fainted; but she lay perfectly insensible, as though dead, with teeth and hands firmly clenched and her eyes open but fixed. It was a *coup de soleil.*

"I laid her carefully in a miserable hut, and watched beside her. I opened her

clenched teeth with a small wooden wedge, and inserted a wet rag, upon which I dropped water to moisten her tongue, which was dry as fur. The unfeeling brutes that composed the native escort were yelling and dancing as though all was well. . . . There was nothing to eat in this spot; my wife had never stirred since she fell by the *coup de soleil*, and merely respired about five times in a minute. It was impossible to remain; the people would have starved. She was laid gently upon her litter, and we started forward on our funeral course. I was ill and broken-hearted, and I followed by her side through the long day's march. . . . In the drawn and distorted features that lay before me I could hardly trace the same face that for years had been my comfort through all the difficulties and dangers of my path. Was she to die? She had never moved a muscle since she fell. My people slept. I was alone, and no sound broke the stillness of the night. The ears ached at the utter silence, till the sudden wild cry of a hyæna made me shudder as the horrible thought rushed through my brain that, should she be buried in this lonely spot, the hyæna would . . . disturb her rest.

"The morning broke; my lamp had just burnt out, and, cramped with the night's watching, I rose from my low seat, and seeing that she lay in the same unaltered state, I went to the door of the hut to breathe one gasp of the fresh morning air. I was watching the first red streak that heralded the rising sun, when I was startled by the words 'Thank God,' faintly uttered behind me. Suddenly she had awoke from her torpor, and with a heart overflowing I went to her bedside. Her eyes were full of madness! She spoke; but the brain was gone!

"The rain poured in torrents, and day after day we were forced to travel for want of provisions, not being able to remain in one position . . . For seven nights I had not slept, and although as weak as a reed, I had marched by the side of her litter. Nature could resist no longer. We reached a village one evening; she had been in violent convulsions successively—it was all but over. I laid her down on her litter within a hut; covered her with a Scotch plaid; and I fell upon my mat insensible, worn out with sorrow and fatigue. My men put a new handle in the pick-axe that evening, and sought for a dry spot to dig her grave!"

Photo by Kelley, Newton Abbot.

THE LATE SIR SAMUEL W. BAKER.

When Sir Samuel Baker awoke from his heavy sleep it was to find his wife with open eyes, calm and clear. She had recovered! Two days' rest, and the party once more moved forward towards their goal. They were now buoyed up by hearing the gratifying knowledge that they were fast approaching the lake. Having striven through all kinds of difficulties, in sickness, starvation, and fatigue, to reach the hidden Nile source, the glorious prize at length burst suddenly upon them, in the shape of a mighty sea, with a shining surface like quicksilver; in the distance, on the western shore, a range of blue mountains rose, as from the bosom of the lake, to a height of 7000 ft. above its level. This lake, the discovery of which marks the crowning achievement in the lives of Sir Samuel Baker and his wife, was named by them the "Albert Nyanza," in everlasting memory of the Prince Consort.

It was in this manner that the long vexed problem of the three sources of the

mighty Nile was solved. After navigating the waters of the newly discovered lake for several days, and eventually verifying his theory of the exit of the White Nile from this lake source, Sir Samuel Baker and his wife, the former still suffering severely from fever and the latter but slowly recovering from the effects of sunstroke, commenced the return march to civilisation. The journey back to Gondokoro was fraught with almost as many hardships and risks of death at the hands of the Arab slavers and hostile native chiefs as were encountered on the forward march. Falling once more into the power of Kamrasi, they found themselves stranded and abandoned in a deserted village, where for two months their sufferings from weakness and from fever reduced them once again to a condition of almost utter helplessness. Subsequently, however, they were fortunate enough to be able to move their camp to Kisuna, where, despite the improvement in their fare, they both still suffered greatly from fever. Here they were again compelled to remain some months forlorn, waiting for an opportunity to escape from Kamrasi's evil power. During their enforced stay at this place they were witnesses of much fighting and of many hideous scenes of cruelty and torture inflicted upon hapless slaves, who were continually being captured in raids. The qualities of cunning and duplicity on the part of Kamrasi were extraordinary. Promises were made only to afford opportunities for deception. The situation was literally heart-breaking, until at length an alliance was formed with a minor chief named M'Gambi, a fortunate circumstance which enabled the party not only to escape from the power of Kamrasi, but gave them the opportunity later on of meeting the Arab trader Ibrahim, with whom they journeyed northwards to Fatiko. Here yet another harassing delay of three months took place before Gondokoro was reached. From Gondokoro the Bakers embarked on a *dahabia*, to sail down the Nile to Khartoum; typhus fever was raging at the time, and three deaths occurred among the crew. At Khartoum, which was reached without further incident, ill-fortune still attended their progress, for another delay took place—waiting for the river to rise, to enable them to pass the Cataracts—and it was late in the year 1865 before Sir Samuel and Lady Baker reached England. The privations, dangers, and heart-breaking disappointments of their first great journey were now ended, and the worn travellers gave themselves up for a time to the peaceful enjoyment of English country life.

In 1869 we find Sir Samuel and Lady Baker setting out again—this time upon an elaborate expedition founded and supported by Ismail, Khedive of Egypt—with the object of abolishing the slave-trade. This was the first attempt ever made to suppress the Arab and native slave-hunters who preyed upon the inhabitants of the Nile Basin. In addition to putting an end to the slave-trade the expedition was to provide for the introduction of legitimate commerce and protection to the natives by the establishment of stations and of a fair and powerful government. Beyond this brief mention of the Khedive Ismail's object, and the general nature of Sir Samuel Baker's task, it is not necessary to go; it is sufficient for present purposes to state that this new expedition proceeded to Gondokoro, where the base was established. The entire Unyoro country was at once formally annexed to Egypt. The foundation for a great future was duly laid; legitimate trade was opened; and slavery, within the territory of Baker's rule, was practically checked. That this great work, the administration of which was so ably initiated and carried out during the four years of Baker's rule, should have failed in producing more permanent results is a misfortune which can in no way be attributed to Sir Samuel Baker. His *firman* expired in due course, and his rule came to an end. Subsequent tragic events in the region of the Soudan have entirely effaced all signs of the good work, and the country has now relapsed into a condition of degradation more lamentable than ever. Nevertheless, the honour of being the first pioneer agents in the task of suppressing the slave-trade is due to Sir Samuel and Lady Baker.

The routes followed in this expedition were in a measure similar to those of the previous exploration journey to the Albert Nyanza, but there were material differences in the surroundings and personnel. Whereas the exploration of the Albert Nyanza was carried out with a mere handful of unreliable followers, and unholy alliances had occasionally to be formed with slave-traders, to enable the expedition to travel from one district to another; the second enterprise, backed with more influence, was on a much larger scale, being well supplied with soldiers and ammunition. In both undertakings great hardships were endured. The intense heat of the sun,

exposure to rain, poverty of nourishing food, the incessant petty annoyances so characteristic of African travel, combined with almost overwhelming cares and anxiety, perpetual disappointments, and heart-breaking delays, by no means exhaust the list of trials which beset the travellers in the accomplishment of both undertakings. If the discovery of the Albert Nyanza was carried to a successful issue, in spite of the lack of supplies and an adequate following of trustworthy men, the later expedition was successfully accomplished in face of equally difficult obstacles. At every turn they met with treachery and deceit; the whole country was infested with hordes of rascals who attacked them upon every opportunity. Numerous pitched battles were fought with the slave-hunters, and order was only preserved by force of arms.

Throughout the chapters of the late Sir Samuel Baker's book, "Ismaïlia," which records the stirring incidents of this anti-slavery expedition, there are numerous touching allusions to the courage and valuable assistance rendered by Lady Baker. Not only was she devoted to the sick and suffering slaves, whom she soothed in their unhappy plight, but she displayed a rare quality of spirited courage with her womanly tenderness. Throughout her African travels Lady Baker exhibited an extraordinary amount of strong character. What nobler tribute can any woman boast than that recorded upon the conclusion of the journey to the Albert Nyanza. "It was no dream," wrote the late Sir Samuel Baker. "A witness sat before me; a face still young, but bronzed like an Arab's by years of exposure to a burning sun; haggard and worn with toil and sickness, and shaded with cares, happily now past; the devoted companion of my pilgrimage, to whom I owed success and life—my wife."

A SONG.

NEW VERSION

Prithee, sweetheart, have a care,
  Jealousy befits thee ill;
And a slave to drear despair,
  Jealousy shall lead thee still.
Wherefore should I seek to dress
These poor charms in loveliness,
  If I did not choose to be
  Fair and beautiful for thee?

Nay, begrudge no gentle word
  Others gather from my tongue;
One a tenderer utt'rance heard
  When the bonny year was young.
Why, then, angered as thou art,
While remembrance in thy heart
  Echoes still the speech of love,
  Dost thou seek me false to prove?

Fair and winsome would I seem
  In the eyes of all mankind,
Only lest the world might deem
  Love had made thy lot unkind.
Yet—so foolish am I grown!—
None but thine the praise I'll own.
  If I be not fair to thee,
  What care I *how* fair I be?

LAURA G. ACKROYD.

SONG.

BY JOHN WILMOT,
EARL OF ROCHESTER.

GIVE me leave to rail at you,
I ask nothing but my due;
To call you false, and then to say
You shall not keep my heart a day;
But alas! against my will,
I must be your captive still
Ah! be kinder, then, for I
Cannot change and would not die.

Kindness has resistless charms,
All besides but weakly move;
Fiercest anger it disarms,
And clips the wings of flying love
Beauty does the heart invade,
Kindness only can persuade;
It gilds the lover's servile chain,
And makes the slaves grow pleased again

TWO MEN AND A RIVER.

By MORLEY ROBERTS.

SUCH a man as Simon Gardiner, who held more land than any other squatter on the Murrumbidgee, is often fairly popular. For he was civil to all whom he fancied might help or hinder him, and servile in an offhand kind of way to such as could do both. His servility said bluffly, "Now with any other man I should be on equal terms, but I frankly acknowledge that it is a different matter with you." So the men who had more sheep in the present, or who possessed greater credit as the beautiful result of sheep in the past, were inclined to think Gardiner a good sort, even if his grandfather had come out to New South Wales in a ship with soldiers. For that is the satiric colonial euphemism for a convict.

But, all the same, he was a beast, and as mean as mud to those who were down, who couldn't get up, or who were obviously of no use to him.

He had no traveller's hut on his station, and travellers—that is, men looking for a job—fared badly at his hands.

"Save this bag of weevilly flour for swagsmen," he said to his storekeeper. "Let them cook it at night and think it's seed-cake."

That was his humour.

He always paid the lowest wages, and often screwed a week's work out of a man down on his luck for ten shillings and bad tucker.

That was his economy.

He starved out a free selector, and then bought the man up at a ridiculous price, when the poor devil had been drowning his troubles at a bush grog-shanty.

This he called generosity.

So the men did not love him, and when they left his employment often said so in the frankest, freest, and most delightfully adjectival manner. Every time he sacked a hand the bush reeked with long-suppressed opinions, which were obviously earnest and probably true.

But this Gardiner could never understand. He continued to believe in his own comparative goodness, perhaps by dint of imagining how much worse he could be if he dared. He said he held strong political views, and any form of meanness looks better when it poses as stemming the flood of democratic progress. To give sufficient sugar in a pannikin of good tea was to pander to the multitude. They wanted too much.

But then Gardiner had not enough, and meant having a good deal more.

His great grief was that his station boundaries did not include the land occupied by Jimmy Morgan, who was in many ways Simon Gardiner's absolute antithesis. They mixed like oil and vinegar, only in this case the vinegar was on the top. Yet nothing, not even financial stress, could induce Morgan to part with his place, not even an entirely inadequate price, which Gardiner swore was ruinously generous when he offered it.

And just then the Great Flood happened, which solved the problem in its own way.

At Grong Grong and thereabouts—that is, let us say, from fifty miles south of the Murrumbidgee to fifty miles north of it—the country is as flat as a flapjack. It is true there are a few pieces of rising ground known to the innocents born in the locality as hills. If a station happens to be reasonably free of scrub and oak-belts, such may be easily discerned at a mile and a half; indeed, anything noticeable at a further distance would be called a range, and be looked on as a notable obstacle to intercourse. And yet over all this country there must be a tilt somewhere, for the river really does run south-west. But not when a flood comes. Then the slope of drainage is manifestly inadequate. The water rises incredibly until there is a Deluge.

When Morgan first took up his land it had just been surveyed. When the black fellows were asked how high the waters ever rose, those simple and dirty children of nature declared with naïveté that it sometimes got halfway up the riverside trees. The surveyors laughed, and told them plainly, in idiomatic English, that they lied. As an Australian aboriginal has no fine objection to mere good-natured abuse, the tribe merely shook their foul

heads and departed, curiously wondering what the white fools were doing with a long chain and painted sticks. But ten years later came a convincing rain, sufficient to wash an unwilling black fellow and make it not unpleasant to stand on the lee side of him.

"There will be a flood—a bit of a flood," said Simon Gardiner, chuckling. "And if there's any spot where it's likely to run deep, it will be at Morgan's."

He rubbed his hard and bony hands in keen anticipation. For—"If he's flooded out, and his old gunyah tumbled down about his ears, and his wife and kids washed out, he'll be glad to sell," said Simon. "And I'll buy at my own price."

But Morgan never thought about a flood. He was just delighted with the rain. His wife and the girls were glad too, for they knew what a narrow shave it had been with them in the past hot summer.

"The oaks pretty near came to an end, didn't they, Nellie?" said Edith, the younger of the two, "and then we should have been out of it, and the jumbucks would have died."

For at the end of the summer Morgan only kept his sheep alive by felling trees for them to browse on.

So they gladly put up with ceaseless rain and muck inside and out, and when the inside of their house got mildew they bore with it for the grass outside, and one good year at the very least, and probably two or three. That meant Melbourne for a long visit, and new dresses and gay times. In spite of living in the bush, they were just getting to feel that new frocks meant a good deal to them; for there were many young men about, entirely ineligible and very interesting, who found Grong Grong a short cut whichever way their business led them.

But they did not reckon on the flood—neither, we are told, did Noah's neighbours; and Simon Gardiner looked on himself as a wiser Noah. He was quite ready to take his neighbours in, yet he was taken unawares in spite of his foresight.

The ancient quiet Murrumbidgee was now running a banker and still rising. It carried down many horses, cattle, and sheep that it had picked up on the way, and they drifted huggermugger with unnumbered trifles from a thousand miles of deep-cut banks. Logs from some low-lying huts went to swell the sordid trash; and perhaps if one could have sorted out all the corpses that went down the red drift, some human bodies might have been found among them; for men will get drunk and lie round careless of the River Serpent which lifts his head in a dark night and crawls glittering on the flat and sucks them down. And if Gardiner could have had his way he would have presented the River Snake with Morgan's body most cheerfully, or his wife's and daughters' too, if need be.

And now the sky was for ever dark and low and heavy; it rained unceasingly, and with an awe-inspiring most perpetual steadiness. The few aboriginals preserved, by the belated care of a Government on which they had been fathered, from poison and shot, hugged their kangaroo robes and retreated carefully to higher ground. But before they cleared out a Mirrool black fellow came to Morgan.

"Missa Morgan," said he, standing bare-shanked in mud, "you mucha budgeree to poor black fellow. Bimeby allasame as creek evlywhere. You sendee jumbucks to Arria, and bimeby you give King Moses some bacca."

But Morgan gave him at once a pound of twist strong enough to make a dead man cough, for the half-intelligible tip, and sent the sheep off after him. They got through Mirrool Creek just in time, and reached Arria's rocky hill after going through miles of water a foot deep. They were even then hardly beyond the jurisdiction of the river, and soon every yellow creek yielded its identity in the turbid universal deluge.

Gardiner, in his pleasing anticipations of the flood's work, had made one error at least, and Destiny, if it was hard on Morgan, was harder on him. When the flood was a foot deep at Grong Grong it was two feet deep at the other station, and the waters drowned ten thousand sheep of Gardiner's the very day they spoke clearly as to what the distant hills meant and the rains of the hills portended. Who could believe these things in that bare, brown land of almost perpetual drought, where any rain was rare that did more than give the grasses' roots a chance to perpetuate their difficult lineage? Yet day by day half-drowned men brought in the news of heavier floods in the east and an unceasing downpour. The night the sheep were drowned it rose three feet on the level. The Murray joined hands with the Murrumbidgee, and the Murrumbidgee acknowledged its kinship with the roaring Lachlan, and the triple flood mowed a heavy swathe in a submerged land.

The same midnight that Morgan hitched up his scared team to escape out of the

"YOU SENDEE JUMBUCKS TO ARRIA, AND BIMEBY YOU GIVE KING MOSES SOME BACCA."

plain, old Gardiner desperately harnessed his, and they went towards the dry land that was left; but as Morgan drove through the glimmering waste with his wife and children there was ringing in his ears something out of his childhood's days in England when he sat and listened to the clergyman—

"And he said, Go up and say unto Ahab, Prepare thy chariot and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not."

So he drove furiously in his mind, but had to let the horses go slow; for the water was to their knees and they trembled and were afraid.

His wife sat beside him, and the two girls behind them clung to each other fearfully. Don, the best beloved of their dogs, crouched under the seat. The other dog was at Arria. But Don whined pitifully. To him this universe of pale dark water was something even more incredible than it was to the others. They had heard of strange and awful floods, but for him, pupped in a drought and trained in a thirsty land of dust, it was a nightmare that made him tremble. But the poor girls encouraged him, and warmed his cold paws in shaking hands.

"I am afraid we shall never get through, Mary," said Morgan in a low voice to his wife. She clutched his left arm.

"Don't despair, Jim," she said softly.

"We get deeper now," he said after a few minutes as they entered a dark, bull-oak forest. "But we must go deeper yet."

The water lapped about their feet and the horses lifted their heads; and Don sprang up between the girls as though the water had bitten him and left him no courage.

"It's deeper than I reckoned on," said Morgan, "and I believe it rises every minute. We must go for the Pine scrub. It's our only chance."

For where a thin patch of pine grew was the highest land about them. But it was a mile's drive, and the waters rose and rose.

In that strange and awful midnight everything seemed unreal and ghastly. There were odd and pitiful cries from the sunk bush. In the dark glimmer of the moving water they sometimes saw a white patch that marked a dead floating sheep; once they heard the roar of a terrified bull and the low of a swimming cow. They knew that the snakes were swimming too, and the girls created out of their minds innumerable serpents gliding like eels for the buggy as a refuge. A lizard that had taken shelter under the seat made Nellie scream. Then Don barked and gave a mournful howl which echoed dully in the moving bush.

And now the horses almost swam. They snorted and stopped. Morgan urged them, and at last, with a plunge that nearly upset the buggy, they went in, and the water rose a foot. Then it gradually grew shallower, and the pines showed above the water. They had just entered the patch of scrub when the near-side horse neighed loudly.

"What did he do that for?" asked Nellie, and the answer was given by an answering neigh from the far side of the pines, among which were a few loftier box-trees.

"Is there anyone else here?" said Mrs. Morgan, who hoped for succour where none could be.

"It looks like it," answered Morgan; "for if the other horse was loose, he would most likely come to ours."

"Cooey!" said his wife; and Morgan cooeyed. His cry was returned from near at hand, and they heard other horses splashing within a hundred yards.

"Who is it?" shouted Morgan.

"Simon Gardiner," replied a quavering voice; and Nellie made a mouth. "Who are you?"

"Morgan and the whole family," answered Morgan with a cheerfulness which surprised himself; for the presence of another human being inspirited him, even if it was Gardiner. "What do you think of it?"

"I don't know what to think," said Gardiner; "but if it rises much we shall all be drowned."

He had to speak loudly to be heard, and he found it difficult to make his voice sound as bad-tempered as he felt, for it is not easy to shout sulkily.

"This is the only chance," said Morgan. "Are you by yourself?"

It appeared that Gardiner was. His men had taken themselves off on his horses, which he denied them permission to do, as soon as things began to look really serious, even leaving him to harness his own buggy. He meant to make it warm for them when the waters went down and they came in for their cheques. They would get none, and if they went to court he would fight them while he had a pound of wool left to raise money on.

He told the Morgans so in a high, querulous voice. But they were thinking of other things. For the water still rose.

SHE WAS FOLLOWED BY HER SISTER, AND WITH GREAT LABOUR MRS. MORGAN TOOK HER PLACE BY THEM.

"Kitty," said Morgan, "this is the highest ground I know of for miles round. If it rises more we shall have to take to the tree here. I'm going to get out and cut the horses adrift and give them a chance. Any moment they might take fright and upset us."

He opened his knife and slipped quietly into the water, which reached his chest. What he could not loose he cut. He noticed with apprehension that as soon as they were free they moved off to the northwards and were soon swimming. It was as if they knew they could not stay there long. Yet they would have to swim five miles at least for much higher ground. Morgan called to Gardiner—

"You'd better let your horses go."

And Gardiner, seeing the necessity, loosed them, though he swore horribly at having to get into the water. When his pair were free they followed Morgan's, and two black hours slowly passed.

As the night began to wane hope grew once more in the hearts of all. It seemed impossible that such a flood could last. They could have prayed with Ajax to be destroyed in the light. But when the dim dawn broke there was no mitigation in the remorseless downpour. And the flood still crept up inch by inch, when every visible increase seemed a new and worse disaster.

An hour after dawn the buggy was no longer possible, and Morgan, crouching against the near tree, made Nellie climb upon his shoulders, and get to the lowest big branch. She was followed by her sister, and with great labour Mrs. Morgan took her place by them. Morgan tried his best, but was unable to raise himself. Though strong he was a heavy man of his years. But if he could not climb the waters could.

"Don't trouble about me," he said. "If it rises much more I can swim to an easier tree. I wonder how Gardiner is doing."

But Gardiner had had a bit of better luck than they. He was on a spot at least two feet higher. His buggy, too, was bigger. But when he was sitting down the water reached his waist.

Even as he sat there in the lukewarm, turbid flood which moved sluggishly about him, though he knew that his flat world was under water, he still ached for the possession of Naboth's vineyard. Not even the terror which walks by night nor the ghosts that moved upon the face of the flood could scare the greediness out of him.

And besides, he said, it was a chance—a good chance. Though the waters receded Morgan's house would be ruined, his flocks destroyed. He might sell now. At the thought Gardiner rose. He drank out of a bottle and called to Morgan.

"Morgan," he said, "how goes it?"

"It rises still," answered Morgan, who was standing on the buggy seat with his back against the tree on which his wretched family sat.

"Will it ever go down?"

Morgan did not answer, and Gardiner drank again.

"Will you sell out now, Morgan?" he cried.

Morgan looked across to him in surprise. Who was this, ready to huxter in the face of death?

"No," he said.

But Gardiner persisted.

"Take my last offer," he cried again.

Morgan shook his head.

"This is no time to buy and sell. We may be dead before the morning."

Gardiner laughed, and sat down, but rose again choking. The water was over his lips. He looked at the tree under which he stood. But he was sixty years of age, and he knew that ten feet of smooth trunk would beat him, if, indeed, the flood could rise so far as to make him try it. He stood on the seat and cursed the warm treacherous liquid covered with dead leaves and pine-needles. It made no noise, and did what it had to do very quietly. The only sound was the sound of the Great Rain, though every now and again a stick loosed out of mud rose like a fish leaping for a fly. Yet he heard Morgan's dog howl.

For Don was standing on the seat with his fore-paws against the tree. He looked pleadingly at the girls above him.

"Couldn't we lift poor Don up, papa?" asked Nellie. But Morgan shook his head.

"Before this is over you may have enough to do to hold on, my child," he answered. And then Don had a fit; he fell back, and went under and kicked dreadfully. The girls screamed, and covered their eyes. But presently Don recovered and regained his old position. He suffered terribly, and several times seemed like to die.

And so they passed the whole silent day—the sombre, black-skied day. They could not talk, and only once did Gardiner speak. His voice sounded very odd and thick to the Morgans.

"Won't you sell out now?" he cried; and he laughed terribly. They heard him chuckling when the night fell once more.

By midnight the women had been twenty-four hours in the tree. They had eaten nothing, and had drunk the flood-water out of Morgan's hat. Presently Mrs. Morgan moaned and fainted. But her husband could do nothing. He had nothing to give her, and he might not even take her in his arms. Then he heard old Gardiner talking to himself or to the River and the Flood.

"Gardiner!" he called.

"Ha! you'll sell now, will you?" cried Gardiner.

"Have you any brandy, Gardiner? My wife is ill."

Simon laughed.

"More than a bottle," he cried.

"Thank God!" cried Morgan; and, kicking off his boots and hanging his coat on a knot in his tree, he swam out through the darkness. He came at last to the buggy, and was trying to climb the seat when Gardiner shouted angrily to him—

"Keep off!" he cried; "don't you come close!"

And Morgan laid hold of a pine sapling. He could see the old man's head and shoulders out of the water.

"Will you sell out now, Morgan?" said Gardiner.

"No," said Morgan.

"Then go back to your perch," answered Gardiner, supping brandy.

"I'll give you ten pounds for it," said Morgan.

And Gardiner jeered him till Morgan loosed his hold of the pine and swam towards him.

"Keep off!" cried the old man thickly, "or I'll brain you and break the bottle at the same time!"

So Morgan swam back again to the sapling and heard Gardiner still pulling at the bottle. What could he do to get the brandy from a drunken old man doomed surely by his own folly? How could he circumvent him? At last he loosed his sapling and swam towards his own tree. But when he was halfway he turned quietly to the right and, swimming right round a thick piece of scrub, came up behind Gardiner, paddling very softly. If he could but swim in close enough to grip hold of him before he was himself seen! And just as he was within four yards, Gardiner turned. He threw the empty bottle which was floating by him very viciously at Morgan. But the swimmer ducked, and the missile struck the water harmlessly.

"You would, would you?" said Gardiner. "I thought as much."

But Morgan was about done for.

"Give me the brandy, and I'll sell out," he cried.

"I'll not trust you."

"For God's sake, Gardiner," said Morgan, "give me the brandy and come down to Grong Grong when the flood's done and name your price."

"Swear on your honour," said Gardiner, "and then I'll trust you."

And Morgan swore.

"And if you go back on it," said Gardiner, "I'll track and hunt you out of the country if it cost me my last pound. And I'll never let up on you till I'm dead."

So Morgan got the brandy.

"Bring back a little," said Gardiner, quite cheerfully.

But Morgan did not answer, and swam on. If he had had the breath to spare he would have laughed.

When he reached the tree he found his wife half-conscious and moaning. He gave the bottle to Nellie and cursed himself that he could not reach them.

And presently Gardiner cried in a loud voice, "Remember, you've sold out, Morgan."

A little while after he spoke again.

"Give me the brandy, Morgan; I'm cold, and the water's over my heart."

But Morgan laughed and gave him no answer. He heard the old man crying at intervals, and the terrified girls asked him what it meant; for in such a night to hear that cold, deathly voice was horrible, most horrible.

But Morgan only said the man was drunk. Who could help him in any way?

"The waters are to my chin, Morgan," he cried again; "they are to my chin! Help! help!"

They were at Morgan's lips, and had not a log floated near him he would have had to swim. He called to Nellie, who held out her hand. Her father sprang from the sunken buggy seat, and, scrambling on the log, laid hold of his child's wrist and a branch. He was soon sitting in the cramped tree-fork with his wife's head upon his breast. And Gardiner cried—

"They are to my lips—to my lips."

But Morgan did not answer. For the horror of it came over him, and he could see the old man choke.

Once more he cried in a very lamentable voice for help. Then he laughed a harsh, crackling laugh, and spoke for the last time.

"I've sold out" was all he said.

And then the River took him, and floating him out over the land which he had so

yearned for, rolled him in the mud, to let him taste its very savour. He went down the slow current which led towards Morgan's homestead with the bodies of dead sheep which had once been his own. And now the waters stayed, for they had come to their most ancient marks, and were slowly subsiding. The rain ceased upon the plain as it had ceased before upon the hills, and the day broke very wonderful in a golden dawn.

When at last the Morgans descended from their tree of refuge upon the desolation which was the cause of many fat years, they went back to a ruined home. But they were not the first there. They found Gardiner trying to grasp his own by the wrecked gate.

VIOLETTE.

A LITTLE SONG FOR THE LUTE.

When April in her piéd smock
Was tending of her flowery flock,
You smiled so softly as I passed,
My simple heart beat loud and fast.
Your eyes, your mouth (O dear and shy!),
With morning dews were sweet and wet—
So sweet I could not help but cry
Bon jour, Violette—
Violette, *bon jour!*

You sighed and laughed; I laughed and sighed,
And marvelled much what would betide.
We seemed such friends—we were *so* young—
And Eyes spake plainlier than Tongue!
I took your hand—you let it stay—
What wonder that our young lips met?
It was so easy, dear, to say
Bon jour, Violette—
Violette, *bon jour!*

O then we loved in laughing mood,
My Maid-Madonna of the wood!
And low we sighed, and low we laughed,
And many a fairy chalice quaffed.
But now—the Evening Star 's a-shine,
Pale lamp of parting and regret!
(Sad Evening Star!) O mine of mine,
Bon soir, Violette—
Violette, *bon soir!*

"*Bon soir! Bon soir!*" a thousand times
The cuckoo from the coppice chimes.
It rises near and echoes far,
A subtle mocking call—*Bon soir*
O dearest, dearest, can it be
The wise bird thinks that we 'll forget?
The World may, foolish bird, not we. . . .
Bon soir, Violette—
Violette, *bon soir!*

Nay, not "*Bon soir*"! Though the slow hours
Loiter a-down no path of flowers;
Though Summer passes, and the wind
Is bitter now that was so kind—
Remember, after Winter, Spring,
With blossoms white and mosses wet:
To dream of it gives heart to sing
A voir, Violette—
Violette, *à voir!*

W. A. MacKenzie.

THE · BALLADE · OF · A · SEDAN

TRANSFORMED · INTO · A · CABINET ·

WHEN Fashion held St. James's Square
With pomp of powder, patch, and queue,
When haughty Madam in her chair
Was borne by lackeys all in blue
To worldly box or serious pew,
Ah, then you kept your palmy day
Sedan that carried Lady Prue
To rout, ridotto, or the play!

COME, quaint Sedan, your secrets share
Of those keen times when gallants knew
That honour had a life to spare
For every dainty satin shoe:
Tell of the roses and the rue
How Death for Love would stop your way,
Sedan that carried Lady Prue
To rout, ridotto, or the play!

TELL Love the link-boy's pitchy flare
Shone lurid o'er that wild to do
A furlong from the Temple Stair,
When, at a word, Sir Nameless drew
On 's cousin Hal—a pass or two,
A thrust in tierce, and well-a-day!
You did not carry Lady Prue
That evening to the Templars' play.

ENVOY.

You still bear bric-à-brac, 'tis true,
But is your burden frailer, pray,
Than when you carried Lady Prue
To rout, ridotto, or the play?

JAMES D. SYMON.

WHEN THE SULTAN GOES TO PRAY.

By JOHN FOSTER FRASER.

HE Sultan of Turkey owes Sir John Tenniel a grudge. I believe that Hamid II. has more than once an appeal to the British Government *'unch's* cartoonist should be decapit- nd his head sent to Stamboul, and : pitched into the Bosphorus. But do things differently in Whitehall, enniel still lives. Like hundreds of ınds of other folks, I had formed my ın as to the personal appearance of ıltan from the cartoons in *Punch*—a -stomached, weak-kneed, bulbous- double-chinned old reprobate, the ımbodiment of *blasé* Eastern sensu- ss. And then, when I actually ' the Shadow of God," of course disappointed. He was no more Tenniel's Sultan than I am like nmed. Indeed, I found him a slim, eatured, bearded, elderly gentleman, ntly incapable of doing an injury ybody. Few Turks have looked he countenance of the Caliph, and Frank and a dog of a Christian to do deemed, in the eyes of all faithful ms, some degrees worse than man- ıter. There are no " Photographers Sublimity " in Constantinople, and cond-rate artists get extravagant because they have painted a fifth- icture of their sovereign to put at the f the steps in some provincial art y. The Koran is very strict on the The reproduction of the human by paint, pencil, pen, chisel, or camera is forbidden. Of course done, like everything else that is den, and chiefly because it is den. But "our Lord and Master, Crown of Ages and the Pride of ountries, the greatest of all Caliphs; uccessor of the Apostle of the rse, the Victorious Conqueror," has had his head stuck between a steel , told to keep still, open his eyes little more, and to look pleasant his photograph was taken. The graphs published of the Sultan are the Sultan at all. I know as a fact on two occasions when supposed photographs of the Caliph were issued to the world, they were photographs of a man with a marked likeness to his Majesty, who gave permission for this little deception to be practised. Therefore, anybody who thinks he is looking at a photograph of the Commander is much mistaken. There is not such a thing in the world, unless it has been taken surreptitiously.

Through the courtesy of the British Ambassador to the Sublime Porte, I was afforded an opportunity of seeing the Sultan on the only day of the week he is on view to anybody besides his Grand Vizier, his high officers of state, and, of course, the Sultana and ladies of the harem. That was on a Friday, the Sunday of the Moslems, when the King went from the Palace of Yildiz Kiosk to the Hamidieh Jami' to perform his devotions. It was a magnificent spectacle, more gorgeous than a royal marriage at home. The brilliancy of colour, the uniforms of the troops, and the general sumptuous splendour outside St. James's Palace on the occasion of the wedding of the Duke of York did not leave so vivid an impression upon my mind as the scene about the mosque when the Sultan went to pray.

Constantinople itself is dirty, and its Grand Rue de Pera is about as inspiring as Threadneedle Street on a rainy day. But some of the suburbs are delightful, and my drive along the curved ways, edged by broad-leafed and shady trees, was a charming experience. I drove past several Turkish cemeteries, which are pitched anywhere and everywhere, graceful cypress boughs always hanging over the long slabs—relating the virtues of the dead—not one of which is perpendicular, but all leaning over as though an earthquake had been trying to dislodge them. By the sides of the road several troops of cavalry, with crimson pennons to their long, slight lances, and headed by a band playing shrill Oriental music, were proceeding the same way as myself. Moslem women, wrapped in huge white gowns, which not only hid their figures, but were pulled over their heads, and almost covered

their faces, gazed at the cavalcade as it dashed by. The horses were well fed and spirited, and pranced as though aware of their dignity. There were many foot-soldiers, whose clothes were loose and baggy, and who all wore the red fez at a tilt to suit individual tastes, trudging along with anything but the mechanical precision of our own troops when they are marched across the Horse Guards Parade. Besides these there was a continual rush of European carriages, nearly all carrying officers of the Turkish Army, who were much too wise to walk and allow dust to gather on their superb uniforms and patent-leather shoes. Other carriages had as their occupants ladies from the harems of distinguished Pashas, fair-cheeked, black-eyed damsels in satins and silks of well-pronounced tints, and with the flimsiest of gauze across the face, while by the side of the coaches, on horse-back, rode flabby-looking eunuchs, their coal-black countenances in strong contrast to their bright headgear.

By the time I reached the Pera-Buyukdereh road, troops from the adjoining barracks had already begun to assemble. As soon as I presented my card, I was conducted by a gold-braided individual, with many salaams, to a building overlooking the mosque, and supplied with a chair at one of the open windows, so that I might command an excellent view, not only of the Sultan as he came from his Palace, but also as he mounted the stairs to pray. The mosque is not a large one, but it is pretty and effective. It is of dazzling whiteness, with a fine dome and high slender minaret, and a thousand and more glittering windows. The green of the trees in the garden of the harem presents a pleasant aspect, while far away is the Bosphorus, burnished with the glare of the noonday sun as it sweeps into the Sea of Marmora. The domes of the mosques of St. Sophia and of the Sultan Ahmed rise clear over the mass of buildings in crowded Constantinople. I could not help being struck with the beauty of the situation, which was sylvan, picturesque, and Oriental all in one. The arrival of officers was continuous, and everybody saluted everybody else by touching the lips and the forehead, while servants went round brushing coats and dusting shoes. The officers' coats were of deep blue, with heavy gold epaulettes and braid trimmings. Everybody wore orders, and more than one man I noticed with quite a row of them across his breast. All the throng donned the customary fez. Presently came the strains of a band playing a sprightly Gallic march, and then the Imperial Ottoman Cavalry hove in sight. The horsemen were mounted on grey chargers and in their smart uniform with fezzes of black astrachan would have done credit to any land. They were headed by a couple of men carrying great brass crescents, from which dangled innumerable bells. They wheeled and circled in perfect order, and when their lances caught the flash of the sun they were altogether imposing. The cavalry had hardly taken up their position along the side of the roadway when another finely caparisoned troop swung along, the horses this time being chestnuts. They were stationed on the other side of the mosque. For nearly an hour it was nothing but more bands and more troops, with plenty of fixed bayonets, and banners flying. Emblazoned officials, fuming and kicking their swords about, came hurrying out of the Palace to give some order or other. The Palace itself, of which an excellent view can be obtained, is a small and unpretentious residence, no larger than a moderate-sized country-house in an English county. But, situated on the heights, and with an outlook over the Bosphorus and Asiatic coast, with varied and rugged scenery, it is an ideal spot to live in, far removed from the dirt and the noise of Constantinople. It is here that the Sultan passes all his life, leaving only to pray or to visit the Seraglio or the Mosque of St. Sophia. It is more difficult for a Frank to enter this Palace than it will ultimately be for him to enter Paradise, according to Moslem ideas. If your mission is to see anyone of lesser degree than his Imperial Majesty, you are never allowed to get beyond the first gate. And if fate has made you an ambassador, and you desire an audience with the Sultan, it will, unfortunately, happen that he is indisposed at the very hour you call. Thus, all things considered, the ordinary mortal has a better chance of hobnobbing with the Grand Lama of Thibet than taking coffee with the Caliph.

The blaring of many bugles was the immediate cause of me straining my neck to see what was coming. It was another regiment of troops—the Zouaves, as picturesque as any I have seen. They were all broad-shouldered, swarthy-skinned fellows, and attired in a garb anything but European. They wore a loose sort of red turban, and around it was a double coil of green cloth. The jackets were of rich claret-coloured red, not unlike waistcoats

put on upside down, but plenteously braided and with a few hundred useless buttons. The trousers, also of red, were as baggy in the neighbourhood of what Carlyle calls the sitting part as any Turk could desire. Then they wore spotless white gaiters. Altogether, they were more fantastic than military. And they had a peculiarity in their walk which distinguished them from the other soldiers. They raised their knees more than is usual, and progressed after the manner of a high-stepping horse. Ordinary blue-serge jacketed troops were brought along by the hundred, until there must have been many thousands around the Hamidieh Jami'. All the bands clashed and blared and did their best to outdo each other in noise. It was interesting to watch the arrival of the great Pashas, their greetings and subservience to one another, and to admire the magnificence of their apparel. Several, whom I supposed were very great men indeed, stood opposite the main gates leading to the mosque, and were saluted by the troops as they passed. When all the soldiers had taken their places, a dozen carts, drawn by mules, were rushed forward, and the whole of the way from the Palace gates to the place of prayer was strewn with moist sand. As the heat of the day was scorching, men with laden sheepskins moved up and down the lines giving water in brass goblets to the thirsty, which was a sensible and excellent thing to do. Other men moved round with dusters and wiped the shoes of the soldiers. But only those in the front row had this honour. When the bands had tired themselves out, there was a rest, and one began wondering when the Sultan really intended coming. Presently down the way I saw some closed carriages approaching. Each was drawn by a couple of splendid bays, and at the side walked several black frock-coated, demure persons, one of whom would probably describe himself as a coloured gentleman. He was a eunuch, and his function in life was to guard the ladies of the harem. The carriages had two or three ladies in each. It was quite easy to see them, and, indeed, they by no means appeared loth to be seen. I am no hand at describing the costumes of ladies, but they were certainly gorgeous. The ladies themselves were

THE SULTAN GOING TO HIS DEVOTIONS AT THE HAMIDIEH JAMI' MOSQUE.

beautiful. They were young and fair, with large eyes which dazzled and made you inclined to at once dash off a sonnet in praise of the curve of a particular eyebrow. Of course, the faces were covered, but, as in the case of the other ladies I have mentioned, the gauze was so transparent that you could see the delicate outline of the nose and the pouting of the lips. Not all the ladies of the harem came; only a few. Had they all come, the coming would have extended for I don't know how long. The lanky, heavy-jawed, and shaky-kneed eunuchs strode solemnly along, ignoring the existence of anybody. The carriages wheeled into the courtyard of the mosque, and were ranged in a row on the left. The horses were taken out and led away. A eunuch stood by the side of each carriage to see that no one approached the ladies while they watched the arrival of their lord and master. Then came the representatives of foreign Courts, in cocked hats and gold lace, and they were received with many bows by the High Chamberlain, who led them to near the Palace and away from the mosque, which probably it was feared they might injure. Their presence in the crowd of befezzed dignitaries, standing in groups beneath the window where I sat, added another touch of brilliancy to a scene amazing in Eastern grandeur, and one that enthralled and fascinated the imagination.

Five magnificent-maned and pawing grey horses were led down the road from the Palace, and, when they had been placed in a row outside the gates leading to the mosque, five handsome and, indeed, beautiful youths came running to them and sprang into the saddle, while all the folks standing about salaamed. These were the Sultan's sons. I have used the unusual word "beautiful" as applied to a man, because that is the one most suited to describe them. Their complexions were as clear and pink-white as those of lovely women. They were rather beneath the medium height even of a Turk, and they were inclined to stoutness. This appearance, however, was perhaps occasioned by their heavy military silver trappings, heavy braiding, and rows of orders. The eldest was something of a dandy, for not only was his little moustache exquisitely curved, but the whole of his face was more thickly powdered than that of a French dame who has passed the age of forty and whose attractions have almost disappeared. The horses upon which the five sons were mounted were of a restless disposition, and kicked and spurned and reared until one became afraid something might happen to the princes. One had to dismount and attempt to pacify the animal by patting it. Then came, in two long rows, the officers of state. They marched like a string of policemen going out on their night beats, only they were more elaborately clad, but less dignified. Some were tall and slim; others were short and podgy. With even tread and solemn mien, however, they marched along, wheeled through the gates, and stood about the mosque steps.

A band, some thirty yards from where I was, struck up with great vigour the famous "Sultan's March." From the tens of thousands of troops there burst a sudden shout, which spread away down the valley, and seemed to be answered back by an echo from the mosques of Stamboul. There are three pauses in the opening bars of the march, which lead up to and give a signal for cheering. The effect was startling and fine. The soldiers all stuck out their chests, and squared their toes, and stood at attention. The carriage with the Sultan was now coming. It was an ordinary open barouche, lined with sage-green satin. The box upon which the driver sat was hung with red and gold, and the driver himself was a far more imposing individual than the Commander of the Faithful. The Sultan was sitting forward, chatting to white-bearded and jovial-looking Osman Pasha, the hero of Plevna, and now private secretary to his imperial master. Of all the brilliantly emblazoned throng, the Sultan was the most modestly attired. He wore the red fez and a long, dark coat, two orders adorning his left breast. That was all. He was careworn, and lines were drawn across his pale, olive countenance. His beard, of a dull reddish-brown, was square-cut, and almost hid the mouth from view. His eyes gave the character to his face. They were sad—those of a man of many cares and trials and sorrows. "As happy as a king" would be an ill phrase to apply to him. As I looked in his face—the face of a man to whom fate had been unkind—I read the tale of a soul's tragedy: despair, defeat, agony of spirit. The office of Sultan, even with a brilliant retinue and many marble palaces, but always a prisoner, with Pashas ever whispering in his ear, and one ambassador pulling this way while another pulls that, is the most unenviable in the whole world. With unmoved features he raised his right hand from breast to forehead in acknowledgment of the salutes.

High on the minaret by the mosque-side a white-robed muezzin stood, and with shrill, thrilling, plaintive voice, clear above all other sounds, sang "*Allâhu akbar* (three times); *ashhadu anna lâ ilâha ill-allâh, anna Mohammedurrasûlu-llâh* (repeatedly); *hayyâ alas-salâ*" (repeatedly), which means "Allah is great; I testify that there is no God but Allah, and Mohammed is the prophet of Allah; come to prayer."

The carriage in which the Sultan rode proceeded slowly through the gates to the imperial entrance of the mosque, a rich carpet covering the marble steps. When the Caliph alighted, he turned to the crowd, raised his hand, and then, alone, walked up the stairs and disappeared from sight, all the dignitaries swarming through the main entrance, pushing like so many Englishwomen trying to enter a church and witness a wedding. The sons of the Sultan joined this crowd. Several of his Majesty's favourite horses were led by grooms to the side of the mosque till prayers were over. The foot of no Christian is permitted to touch the floor of this sacred place, and so, during the half-hour before the Sultan appeared again, there was nothing for it but to inspect the soldiers, who, all facing the mosque, stood at ease and gossiped. The officers, in their blue cloaks slashed with red silk, the steeds pulling at their bits, the fluttering pennons, the ladies in the carriages, and, far away, behind three rows of horse-soldiers, the throng of sightseers from the capital, provided enough to attract and interest. The picture was one full of novelty to the European eye.

The appearance of the princes running across the courtyard to their horses was the first signal that prayers were over. Two of the sons were very little chaps, about eight or ten years old, and they had to be lifted to their animals, where they sat, each holding a lance, but evidently not quite sure whether they were going to be pitched off or not. Marshals, generals, and others made a sort of semicircle, and bowed low, again and again, when the Sultan came out. He did not return to the Palace in the coach by which he came. He entered a hooded vehicle, with big, heavy, painted wheels, drawn by a couple of cream-coloured ponies. Seizing the reins, he gave a swing of the whip, and drove off with not even a groom perched behind. There was, however, no need for a groom. All the Court functionaries, were they athletic or the opposite, started running at the back of the carriage, holding on to it, pushing it, and giving the wheels a shove with their hands, for all the world like a pack of political partisans at the tail of a newly elected Parliamentary candidate. So the Caliph disappeared from view; all the bands started playing different airs, and the soldiers were marched off different ways, and once more all was confusion and shouting.

I had no sooner drunk some coffee which the Grand Chamberlain had sent for the refreshment of his guests than I had to set off through the motley crowd, guided by a Turk who could understand me about as little as I could understand him, to find my carriage. The ride back to Constantinople was as exciting as driving from the Bois de Boulogne down the Champs Elysées after the Grand Prix. The way was packed with conveyances in charge of shrieking coachmen, and the din was terrible. Pashas snorted at the delays; beauties from harems gazed out of the windows, heedless of the sour-featured eunuchs, to have a glimpse at a European, and then raised the curtain at the back of the carriage to obtain another glimpse; pedestrians swore at drivers for nearly running them down; horse-soldiers careered hither and thither. It was an interesting morning, and one which I see again in my mind's eye as I write, with all its brilliancy and pageantry.

THE RIGHT WAY TO SEE NORWAY.

By H. L. BRÆKSTAD.

NORWAY has rapidly become one of the happy hunting-grounds of the English tourist, and steam-ship companies, yachting and tourists' agencies are keenly competing for the privilege of carrying the adventurous holiday-makers across the North Sea, and showing them the glories of the land of the Vikings and the Midnight Sun.

A generation or two ago the regular visitors to Norway consisted principally of wealthy Englishmen and their friends, who went there to fish and shoot and to brace themselves up after the fatigues of the London season. Many of them must now look back with a certain regret to that happy, pleasant time when they were left in undisturbed possession of the

KILEFOS, NEAR GUDVANGEN, 1850 FEET HIGH.

country with its splendid salmon rivers and vast shooting grounds. In those days there were no advertisements to be seen in the newspapers or on the walls of the railway stations, calling attention to Norway as a country for the tourist. There were, of course, regular steamers from Hull and London to Bergen and Christiania, but they depended more upon goods than passenger traffic, and if you turned to the pages of "Bradshaw," you were sure to find the sailings of these steamers; otherwise, the country was left very much to advertise itself as one of the finest in Europe in which to spend a holiday. Very soon, however, one or two English tourist agencies saw an "opening," and a number of personally conducted and independent tours were arranged and advertised. The tourist traffic increased rapidly, and during the last few years Norway has been visited each summer on an average by twenty thousand English. One of the latest developments of this traffic is the so-called "Cruises on the Norwegian coast"; but although this may be a very convenient and inexpensive way of getting a glimpse of the country, it can hardly be said to be the right way of seeing Norway. For a moderate sum you embark at Hull, Newcastle, or Aberdeen, on board a comfortably fitted-up passenger-steamer or steam-yacht, and proceed across the North Sea and along the Norwegian coast and fjords, the passengers remaining the whole of the time on board, except on the few occasions when the vessel stops at some town or place on the way up the fjords, to allow them to make a short excursion up the country to some waterfall or other place of interest. You sit in your deck-chair and smoke your cigarette, while an ever-changing panorama of some of the grandest and wildest scenery passes before your eyes, and, so far, it must be admitted that this is a convenient and comfortable way of getting a glimpse of Norway, but, strictly speaking, it is but a glimpse. Much of the charm of travelling in foreign countries is derived from the intercourse with the inhabitants; but the passengers on these cruisers, or "floating hotels," as they are called by the Norwegians, have unfortunately little or no opportunity of mixing with the people, or of becoming acquainted with their mode of life. These "cruises" may, however, be recommended as pioneering expeditions to enable the uninitiated to choose some pleasant spot, where on their next visit—for in most cases anyone who has been to Norway is sure to wish to see it again — they can settle down and make excursions into the country, or on the fjords by the local steamers.

THE EMPEROR WILLIAM'S KARIOL.

The right way to see Norway and to enjoy your trip thoroughly is to travel "independently," whether alone or in a small party of two or four; large parties should be avoided. There are several routes from England to Norway, both across the North Sea and overland viâ Holland, Hamburg, Copenhagen, and

Gothenburg. This latter route can be recommended to those who do not care to undergo the sufferings of *mal de mer*, but it is a long journey, occupying sixty hours' continual travelling, and is, besides, also somewhat expensive. The shortest and cheapest way to reach Norway is by steamer from Hull or Newcastle to Bergen or Christiania, or from London to Christiansand and Christiania, and the dates of sailing and the fares can easily be found in Norway; all the people you come into contact with know English sufficiently to understand all your wants, and when you, besides, have the usual vocabulary in your guide-book to refer to, you may safely venture into any part of the country. The Norwegians are well known for their honesty, and "overcharging" is a thing rarely heard of. At all hotels and posting-stations the prices are fixed. If you remain for a week or more a considerable

PEASANTS FROM BONDHUS, IN HARDANGER.

in the advertisement pages of "Bradshaw" or the "A.B.C. Guide." To do the whole of Norway in one season is a stupendous task, and could scarcely be accomplished in less than three months. The traveller should therefore select one particular part of the country for each visit, and allow sufficient time to make the tour leisurely in order to enjoy it thoroughly and have a few days in reserve in the event of bad weather. Once landed in Norway, the cost of travelling "independently" is no greater than by the personally conducted tours. It is no longer necessary to have a guide or interpreter reduction is generally made. Excellent board and lodgings can thus be obtained for the moderate price of four shillings and sixpence per day. In travelling by the Norwegian steamers it is well to remember that husband and wife only pay a fare and a half. Life on board the fjord steamers is an interesting and enjoyable one. The accommodation on board is good, and the food and cooking excellent. Most visitors come away from Norway with pleasant recollections of the wonderful "spreads" at breakfast, dinner, and supper on board these steamers. The same may now also be said about the hotels, both in town

and country. Until about ten years ago the traveller had to put up with very plain and often poor accommodation at the old posting-stations, but now large and comfortable hotels are to be found on all the principal routes, and even at the out-of-the-way places great improvements have been made both with regard to accommodation and food. Good wines can always be had at moderate prices, but the beer of the country—a kind of Lager beer—is excellent, and can safely be recommended. The national vehicle of the country is the well-known *kariol*, a kind of low gig, holding only one passenger, with a seat behind for the driver. The Illustration on page 465 is from a photograph of a *kariol* belonging to the German Emperor, which he uses on his annual visits to Norway. There is nothing more delightful and exhilarating than a drive in a *kariol* down the Norwegian hills. The *stolkjærre*, which holds two passengers, is also very much used, especially for the conveyance of travellers, and is therefore the more "sociable" of the two vehicles. By the *stolkjærre* two persons can travel for a fare and a half. For a party of three or four persons very comfortable four-wheeled carriages can be obtained on all the principal routes. The "Lomme-Reiseroute," a kind of Norwegian "Bradshaw," or "Bennett's Handbook," an excellent work in English, will give the traveller every information about the distances between the stations and the travelling expenses on the various routes, both by land and water. Norway is an ideal country for pedestrians and cyclists. Although it is mountainous, the roads have been so skilfully constructed in zigzag windings that cyclists will find no difficulty in climbing the hills. A useful map for cyclists has lately been published at Christiania, and can easily be obtained through one's bookseller.

For those travellers who wish to avoid all trouble and difficulties connected with payments in foreign money, a very convenient and useful system of railway, steamer, posting, and hotel coupons has lately been established by some of the tourist agencies both in England and Norway. The latter have branch offices at all the principal ports of landing, and will even undertake to plan out carefully the tour for each individual or party according to the time at his or their disposal, showing the distances to be travelled each day, what excursions to make en route, and giving other useful hints to the tourist bent on "independent" travelling. One ought not to forget to secure a berth in good time by one of the steamers from England, as they are generally crowded during the summer season.

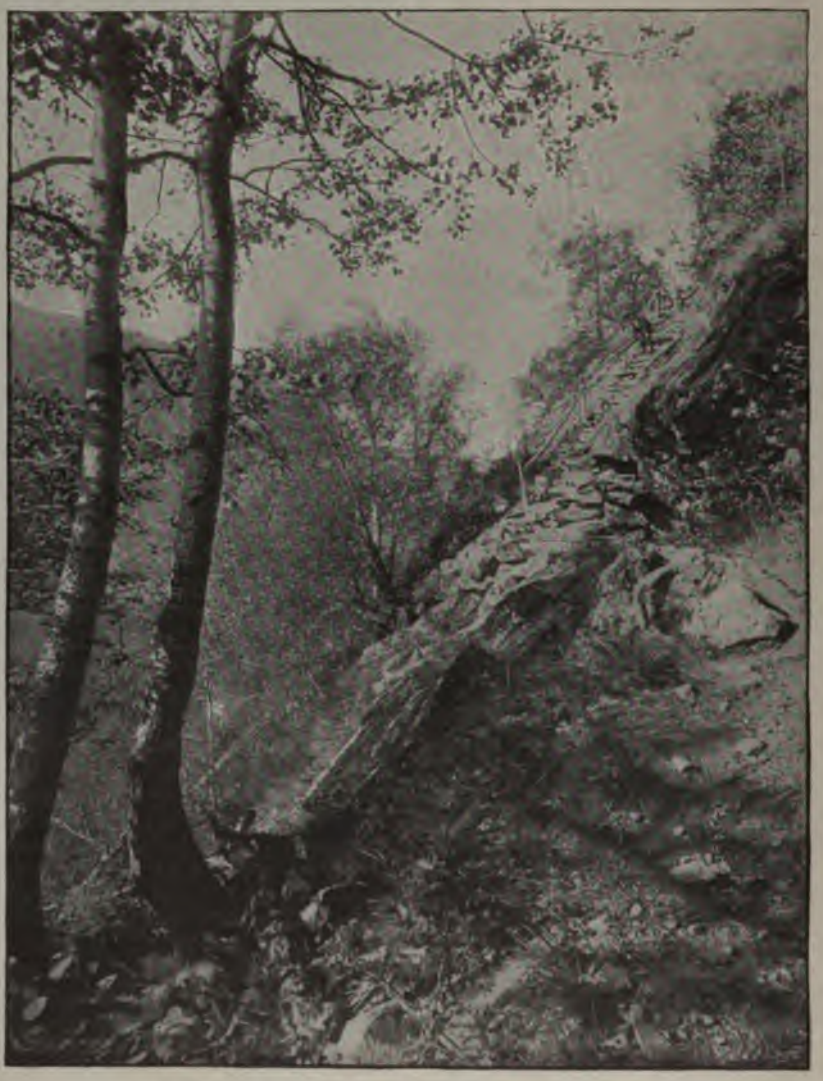
It is not my intention to attempt any description of the country and the people in this short article. I will only refer the intending visitor to the numerous books of travel on Norway which of late have been published, and I would recommend him to make himself acquainted with one or two of them—for instance, Goodman's "Best Tour in Norway" and Mockler-Ferryman's "In the Northman's Land," before leaving England.

Having called attention to what I consider to be the right way of seeing Norway—that of travelling independently and leisurely through the country, to go where you like and to stop where you like — and having shown the increased facilities and great improvements made of late for the comfort of the visitors to the country, I will now sketch in rough outlines some of the best tours in Norway, which the reader, having provided himself with a road-map of the country, will be easily able to follow.

The first I will call *The Suldal-Hardanger Tour*. Take one of the steamers from Hull or Newcastle for Bergen, but land at Stavanger, whence proceed the same day by one of the fjord steamers to Sand, at the head of the Buknfjord, and thence by road to Osen on the Suldal lake. Here take the small steamer to Næs, at the opposite end of the lake, whence by road through the magnificent Bratlands valley to Horre on the Röldal lake, where a day or two may be pleasantly spent. There are good hotels at Horre and the neighbouring village of Röldal. From Horre proceed by road across the Röldal mountain to Odde in Hardanger, passing the beautiful waterfalls, the Espeland and Laatefos. At Odde the traveller should remain for three or four days. From here excursions can be made to the Buarbræ and Folgefond Glaciers. One day should be devoted to an excursion to the celebrated waterfall, the Skjæggedalsfos, which is reached partly by boat and partly on foot. Several hours of hard climbing along a narrow path on the side of a lofty mountain has to be accomplished, but no one will ever regret the exertion. On the next page will be found an Illustration from a photograph of a point of the path, 1500 ft. above the fjord. If time permits, two days should be allowed for this excursion, especially if

ladies are of the party. Good quarters for the night can be had at the new hotel at Skjæggedal. From Odde proceed by steamer along the famous Hardanger fjord to Bergen, where, before returning to England, one or two days should be reserved for the sights of the town, the beautiful environs, and the old church at Fantoft. From Bergen there are four or five steamers a week to Hull or Newcastle. This tour can be accomplished in fourteen days, costing on an average £1 per day, including all expenses.

For the second tour—*The Sognefjord and Nordfjord Tour*—embark also at Hull or Newcastle and proceed to Bergen. The morning after arrival, go on by rail to Vossevangen and thence by road to the famous Stalheim, with its large and excellent hotel. One or two days should be spent here for rest or walks in the neighbourhood. From Stalheim by road through the magnificent Nærödal to Gudvangen on the Sognefjord. Opposite the village of Gudvangen is the remarkable fall—the Kilefos, 1850 ft. high—of which we present an Illustration. From Gudvangen proceed by steamer along the



MOUNTAIN PATH ON THE WAY TO SKJÆGGEDALSFOS.

celebrated Næröfjord and Sognefjord as far as Vadheim, whence by road to Utvik on the Nordfjord. Here cross by boat or

HOW ROADS ARE BUILT ALONG THE FJORDS.

steamer to Faleide, and then by road past the mighty Hornindalsrokken to Hellesylt. Thence by steamer through the Geiranger, the wildest and grandest of the Norwegian fjords, to Merok, at the head of the fjord. Merok can now also be reached from Hellesylt viâ Visnæs, Stryn, and Grotlid. This road, which was only finished last year, has opened up another new district, full of wonderful beauty and grandeur, to the tourist. From Merok by steamer along the Storfjord to Aalesund. No time should be lost here in catching another steamer for Bergen, where any spare days can be profitably spent before returning to England. This tour can also be accomplished in fourteen days, but will cost £2 to £3 more than the first.

The third tour—*The Grand Tour of Western Norway*, as it may be called—is really a combination of the first and the second tour, and can be accomplished in three weeks, if the stay at Röldal, Odde, and Stalheim is curtailed by a day at each place. The traveller lands at Stavanger and, after having finished the Suldal-Hardanger Tour, proceeds on his arrival at Bergen to Vossevangen, Stalheim, and Gudvangen, completing the remainder of the Sognefjord and Nordfjord Tour as far as Aalesund; thence by steamer to Bergen and back to England. The cost of this tour is about £25.

Anyone who has a month at his disposal should extend this last tour to the Romsdal district. In this case proceed by steamer from Aalesund to Molde and Veblungsnæs. Thence by road up the Romsdal to Horgheim, and back again the same way to Molde. A fine view of the celebrated mountains, the Romsdalhorn and the Troldtinderne, is obtained on the way to Horgheim. The scenery in this neighbourhood is altogether very grand and impressive. From Molde by steamer to Bergen and thence to England. The Romsdal trip would cost about £3 extra. By including the Romsdal, the traveller has really seen all that is grandest of Western Norway.

The fourth—*The West Coast, Throndhjem, and Christiania Tour*—would first of all include all the places visited on the preceding tour in Western Norway and the Romsdal district, but instead of returning to Bergen from Horgheim, the traveller should continue up the Romsdal to Dombaas on the Dovre Mountain (a fine field for botanists and sportsmen), where a day or two should be spent. From Dombaas proceed along the main road from Christiania to Throndhjem as far as Stören, where take the train to Throndhjem,

NORWEGIAN METHOD OF DRYING HAY.

the ancient capital of Norway. One or two days should be reserved for seeing the old cathedral, the environs, and the two waterfalls in the neighbourhood. From Throndhjem by train to Christiania, a long but very interesting railway journey of seventeen hours. The sights of Christiania, the museums, the old Viking ship, etc., and a visit to Holmenkollen will only occupy a couple of days. From Christiania there are weekly steamers to London and Hull. This tour takes five weeks to accomplish, and the expenses will not exceed £1 per day.

The fifth—*The Telemarken-Hardanger Tour*—can be made by steamer from London, Hull, or Newcastle to Christiania. Having done the sights of the capital, proceed by rail to Kongsberg, thence by road to Hitterdal (with the ancient wooden church) and Tinoset. From here make an excursion to the celebrated Rjukanfos, one of the finest waterfalls in Europe. Then proceed along the main road through Telemarken to Hankelidsæter and Röldal. Here cross the mountain to Odde, where two or three days should be spent in making excursions (see the first tour). From Odde by steamer on the Hardanger fjord to Bergen, whence by steamer to England. This tour can be comfortably accomplished in fourteen days. Average cost about £1 per day.

PEASANTS FROM JÖLSTER, ON THE SÖNDFJORD.

The only important tour now left to mention is the very long and fascinating one to the North Cape. The scenery on the Nordland coast and in the Lofoten Islands is well known for its peculiar character and mystic beauty. The Midnight Sun is visible at the North Cape from the middle of May to the end of July, and any traveller who finds himself in Throndhjem during that period can proceed from thence in the Norwegian mail steamers, and be back at Throndhjem in eight days.

THE PET LAMB.—By Miss Eley.

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THE ENGLISH ILLUSTRATED MAGAZINE.

By HUBERT CRACKANTHORPE.

TREVOR PERKINS, when he had hung up his hat, sat down, adjusted his spectacles, and ran his fingers through his lanky hair. The long low room presented an ill-scoured and impoverished aspect. It was almost deserted: a woman in a gaudy bonnet, poring over a halfpenny newspaper, sat absently munching thick slices of bread-and-butter; at the far end two elderly gentlemen in shabby tall hats clicked their dominoes over the marble-topped table. The atmosphere was heavy with the scent of stale food, and the waitresses—three anæmic young women, wearing white caps and black, close-fitting dresses—stood stationed in weary, listless attitudes. From outside, through the half-opened door, drifted the rumble of the Strand and the shuffle of hurrying feet; and behind the blurred glass of the shop-window flitted the ceaseless passage of dim silhouettes.

"Good afternoon, Mr. Perkins. You're quite a stranger," the waitress began, standing before him and leaning in a vaguely coquettish attitude, her knuckles on the greasy, marble-topped table.

"Yes, I've been troubled all the spring with a disagreeable cough," the young man answered.

His voice was precise and without tone. His head was wide and overgrown; he sat in a limp, ungraceful attitude; his shoulders were narrow and sloping; his whole frame meagre, almost puny. He fingered his scraggy, immature moustache, and his face, behind the gold-rimmed spectacles, wore the pale placidity of a thoughtful mind.

"Most likely it'll be on account of this funny, changeable weather we've been having. It's more seasonable to-day though, isn't it? You're not looking very flash," she added. "Tea and tea-cake, I suppose?"

"Yes, if you please, and I think I could fancy an egg."

"I'll pick you out a nice one," said the girl as she turned away.

For a moment he let his eyes follow her retreating figure, then once more ran his fingers slowly through his lanky hair.

Presently, drawing a book from his pocket, he opened it before him and began to read.

"When a man does some violence to his own nature in adhering to the parent bulk; when its character and aspirations are not repeated in him; when his duty to himself runs counter to his outward obligations; when the component parts of the State, its institutions, must have mainstays passed round them to hold them together; when the family is no longer the State in miniature, and woman demurs to what is expected of her; when the populace breaks over its natural barriers; when the faculty of building ceases; when the Ideal and the Practical seem mutually antagonistic, and the youth must crush his genius into cleverness if he will catch on as a citizen—then of that State it may be said that its day, as a State, is over; that nature is no longer in it; and that endless disintegration is its portion——"

The girl, clattering her tray on to the table, interrupted him; he looked up at her with an impatient gesture; then, while she arranged the tea-things before him, turned again to his book. When he ceased reading, she had moved away.

The words, "When a man does some violence to his own nature in adhering to

the parent bulk . . . when his duty to himself runs counter to his outward obligations," sang in his ears as he stirred his tea. And, pondering on the significance of his past life, he seemed to realise the profundity of the phrase.

Yes, the curse of decadence lay over the land. The ancient idols had been cast down in the market-place. A new generation had arisen; a generation old before its time—"Venue trop tard dans un siècle trop vieux," as the French poet had sung; a generation doomed to the irreparable loss of the happy illusions of youth; a generation incapable of faith, groaning beneath an accumulation of precocious experience, eternally haunted by the hideous habit of introspection.

Yes, and in his own case how true it all was! As he finished his egg all his boyhood came back to him: the lengthy, dreary Sunday morning hours spent beside his father and mother in that bare Baptist chapel off the Pentonville Road; the attitude of bawling familiarity, half cringing, half patronising, adopted by the minister towards the Deity; his own first boyish, timorous doubtings, resolving themselves later into long, secret searchings of heart; then the stern resolve to learn, to judge things for himself; the nights spent in sifting the truth, absorbed in Voltaire, Rousseau, and Herbert Spencer; and finally, that eventful morning of his great revolt—his dramatic refusal to accompany his father to chapel, his defiant proclamation of his intellectual emancipation. . . . He recalled all the details of the crisis with a mild and complacent pride.

And yet—and yet, he mused bitterly, of what avail had these things proved? To the sensitive the fruit of the tree of knowledge tasted bitter as Dead Sea fruit—that was the inexorable law. He finished his tea thoughtfully, and reminded himself how he had elected to live his own life—apart, shrinking instinctively from the heedless and facile animality of his fellow-salesmen, acquiescing in their disdain of him, effacing himself during shop-hours, and allowing those of coarser fibre to oust him from promotion, to push their way past him, up into the superior departments. Upon none of these things, he told himself, had he set his heart: he had preferred to stand aside calmly while the others jostled past him in their senseless race for worldly success, jealously preserving his pride in himself, and in the evenings, in the cheerless solitude of his bed-room, awakening to a pent-up consciousness of the play of his own personality.

Thus he had passed through many phases. Thus, in his way, he had become a dilettante, cultivating with no slight care that "state of mind at once very intelligent and very voluptuous which inclines us towards diverse forms of life, and leads us to lend ourselves to each one of these in turn, without giving ourselves up to any one of them."

He had studied Shakspere diligently, and, to elevate his conception of life, had committed to memory the more philosophical passages. He had read "Wilhelm Meister" from beginning to end; he worshipped Goethe vaguely as the highest human type. Ruskin had been to him a revelation from which he had never altogether recovered, though latterly the theory of "Art for Art's sake" had, upon consideration, seemed to him curiously alluring. He judged Carlyle to be a man of genius, and Byron to be a great poet, and he was wont to pride himself upon the modernity of his contempt for the vulgar works of Charles Dickens. He possessed two volumes of the suppressed English translation of M. Zola's works: he believed Paris to be an immoral city. He considered himself to be a passionate lover of books, like Charles Lamb or the late Lord Macaulay; he read with avidity the strenuous productions of certain contemporary novelists and the literary page of the *Daily Chronicle*. He kept a psychological diary—an elaborate record of his thoughts and sensations—and once upon a time he had written an essay upon "Life's Ultimate Aim," which had been accepted, but never published, by a weekly journal of advanced thought.

He was alone in the world. He had discovered that for his parents he had no genuine affection, and this discovery he was wont to deplore, upbraiding himself weakly that he could not overlook the crude bigotry of their point of view. He had no real friends: he had found no one to whom he could unbosom his intimate thoughts. So, though outwardly he appeared to mix with the world, to assume an indifferent acquiescence in its ways, inwardly he lived the life of a recluse, communing in solitude with himself alone. Instinctively he shrank from the coarse contact of men—from their blatant glorification of their animal instincts—and there were moments when his soul yearned vaguely for the subtle companionship of a woman's delicate mind.

Not that, in his time, he had not experienced the whole gamut of love. Five years ago, on the very threshold of life,

HE LET HIS EYES FOLLOW HER RETREATING FIGURE.

he had given his heart to a woman, and during three weeks he had lived, as it seemed to him now, through all the wonderful and tormenting ecstasy of love. He had made himself her slave; he had worshipped the ground on which she trod; and then, one day she had ignobly betrayed him. He had traversed all the heights and depths of human passion, and he had suffered as only the sensitive know how to suffer. For five years had this dearly bought knowledge of the perfidy of woman and the haunting consciousness of his own disillusionment restrained him from further amorous experience. All the confident spontaneity of his youth was turned to bitterness and gall: he had grown cynical and pessimistic, he looked upon his faith in human nature as irrevocably shattered.

But latterly, an indefinable disquietude, a strange and morbid dissatisfaction, seemed to have taken possession of his being, and finally, one evening, after reading an English translation of one of M. Bourget's novels, he had felt this wistful conviction steal over him—that where his fellow-men failed to comprehend his secluded attitude, a woman might succeed; and that a woman might appreciate him for that very sensitivity of his which was so apt to excite the coarser sex to active hostility; and that perhaps, after all, Life was more important than Literature, and that an assiduous cultivation of self, by means of a cunning management of experience, represented the last word of a *fin-de-siècle* philosophy.

The two elderly gentlemen adjusted their shabby tall hats and prepared to relinquish their dominoes. The woman in the gaudy bonnet was gone. Trevor Perkins roused himself from his reverie, and, glancing round the room, caught the eye of the waitress. She smiled responsively and came towards him.

Her name was Emily Hammond, and she lived with her married sister, whose husband kept a tobacconist's shop off the Euston Road. She had confided to him that she was not happy at home, and from time to time (he had frequented the shop for more than a year) he had talked to her of his loneliness, hinted at the great grief of his early boyhood, and explained something of the bitterness of his disillusionment. She had not altogether comprehended his meaning, but she would listen to him with a sympathetic attention that seemed to him, when he reflected on it, almost pathetic; and he found that their talks together stimulated him to a keener realisation of himself.

So, one Easter Monday afternoon, he had taken her to Olympia, and afterwards, at tea on the Rialto (the entertainment consisted of a representation of Venice in London), he had talked to her of the Renaissance—of that wonderful revival of learning in Italy after the darkness of the Middle Ages—and when he had finished she had told him shyly how his cleverness intimidated her. Then, in a moment of weakness he had fondly dreamed that her simple, unaffected companionship might have proved a solace to him, and that together they might have achieved that most perfect of human relationships—real friendship between man and woman. But before long he had discovered that she was in the habit of frequenting the minor music-halls with a cousin of hers, a gaudy youth from the City; and remembering his own sensitivity, he had cynically set to work to shatter this, perhaps the last of his illusions. With that quick pride that was characteristic of him he had let his intimacy with her brusquely lapse. Yet even so he did not escape certain pangs of remorse: he was afraid that she would not have appreciated his motives, and that she might have misconstrued his behaviour. Their first meeting just now had perhaps been somewhat strained: as she came up to the table he felt prompted to reassure her, to convey to her that he bore her no ill-will.

"Well, Miss Hammond, and what have you been doing with yourself?" he began, with a forced jauntiness.

"Oh, nothing wonderful! Just jogging along—same song, same tune."

"Do you know, I 've been intending to come round to look you up for ever so long?"

He looked up at her quickly: he fancied he detected a note of resentment in her voice, and he added hastily—

"I suppose you thought I 'd forgotten all about you?"

"Perhaps I didn't think anything at all about it?"

He smiled indulgently.

"Come, don't be angry," he continued.

"Angry! I 'm sure I don't know what you mean."

"But you're offended with me, I can see."

"What a funny man you are, to be sure, Mr. Perkins!" she retorted.

He felt reassured: they were friends again once more. "Don't go," he went on insinuatingly; "I want to ask you something."

She paused, leaning her wrists on the table: her lips were expectantly parted.

"Will you come out with me on Sunday evening?" he asked, lowering his voice.

He expected a coquettish refusal. But she answered simply—

"Certainly, Mr. Perkins."

"Shall we meet, then, at Hyde Park Corner at half-past eight?"

"I shall be very pleased," she answered in the same tone.

"And you don't think too badly of me?"

"But really, Mr. Perkins, I don't think badly of you at all. I'm sure I don't know where you get these funny ideas from."

"I want you to think well of me," he murmured.

She glanced nervously over her shoulder. Behind her an elderly gentleman was impatiently rapping his plate. She moved away, smiling in mock ruefulness.

He lingered for some minutes, affectionately watching her as she flitted to and fro about the room. Once or twice she smiled back at him sympathetically. And when at length he rose to go, her eyes sparkled upon him with simple, unfeigned pleasure.

He mounted an omnibus, and as the vehicle rumbled on towards Charing Cross, he felt his heart respond in vague exhilaration to all the murky, golden splendour of the glamorous London night.

II.

They met, greeted each other simply, and turned silently into the Park. Overhead a dark, romantic sky quivered with a myriad glittering stars—an infinity of distant worlds, dimly winking through measureless miles of space.

"What a nice warm evening! It's quite summery," she murmured.

He made no answer, but pressing her arm, drew it gently beneath his own.

They crossed the road, and as they turned down the long avenue, beneath the spreading branches of the great elms, the moon appeared, a monstrous disc of glistening silver, slowly climbing the sky, to preside, as it were, over all the Park. A subdued rumour of decorous footfalls waited on the still night air; down the stately avenue and beneath the ancient trees the vague silhouettes of countless couples were flitting through the pale moonlight.

Trevor and Emily strolled on. Neither spoke; now and then he glanced up at the moon, wistfully, while she watched the silently sauntering stream of lovers or the closely locked couples that crowded the benches. By and by he felt her head nestle on to his shoulder, and instinctively he passed his arm around her waist.

"Dear Miss Hammond!" he whispered, bending his face to hers.

"Oh, Mr. Perkins, don't be unkind!" she answered, gently rebuffing him.

"Unkind? But how am I unkind?"

"Don't be unkind," she repeated vaguely.

Disconcerted, he looked away from her, and they resumed their walk.

He gazed up at the stars, and tried to lose himself in the wondrous immensity of the firmament, to comprehend the infinite insignificance of human life. And, as his eyes travelled over the great glittering assemblage, he recalled, with a dreamy wonder, the vast range of human aspiration, the persistent progress of scientific achievement, the unflagging effort of each successive generation. And presently an overwhelming sense of the grotesque futility of it all oppressed him. He thought of himself—of his lonely life, of his unsatisfied melancholy, of the bitterness of his experience, of that welling spring of happiness which had been irreparably poisoned. He looked at the girl by his side: their eyes met: her lips parted in a faint, tremulous smile. Ah! *she* was happy: *she* could not understand this haunting sense of the pitiful hollowness of things!

How fresh and sweet and simple she looked in the pale moonlight! Could he not, during one short, mad hour, escape from himself?

"Are you not getting tired, Miss Hammond?" he asked gently.

"Well, I do think we might rest a bit," she answered.

They walked on, looking about them, for most of the benches seemed already occupied. At last they discovered one that was half empty. A couple—the man was a soldier—was in possession of the one corner; Trevor and Emily sat down on the other.

All the Park seemed alive with lovers, sauntering in silent embrace beneath the gleaming, full-faced moon. The heavy breath of human love seemed to float through the warm, still, night air; and now and then from out the distant darkness there sounded a woman's strident laugh.

"Emily!" he murmured, drawing her towards him.

"Mr. Perkins!" she whispered softly in reply.

"Look up at the stars," he continued.

"Yes, isn't it a fine night?"

"How wonderful to think that they are

all different worlds, millions and millions of miles away!"

"Do you think they can see us?" she asked.

"I daresay. Who knows?" he answered dreamily.

"What a spoony lot they must think us!"

INSTINCTIVELY HE PASSED HIS ARM AROUND HER WAIST.

He joined in her laugh uneasily. Her remark jarred vaguely upon his sensitivity. And parenthetically he deplored his own fastidious and exacting taste.

They relapsed into silence, while she nestled towards him shyly. He kissed her on the forehead; she made no resistance, but began—

"You know Lottie Blandford, that tall scarecrow of a girl—you know, what serves in the front at our place. She 's awfully jealous of me and you. When you were talking to me the other day in the shop, didn't you notice how she kept edging and trying to catch what you were saying. She 's a real mean, spiteful thing—that 's what she is. And the other evening I could stand her nasty prying ways no longer, and I says to her straight out. . . ."

He let her prattle on, while his thoughts drifted towards profounder things. . . . She looked up to him: she believed in him; she cared for him after her guileless, untutored fashion. By a dozen touchingly feminine movements she had betrayed herself. . . . Was there, then, no response that he could make? Must he let her suffer—suffer as he had suffered? . . .

Could he not rather watch over and preserve intact those bright, girlish illusions of hers concerning him? . . . Could he not be kind—yes, infinitely kind: her simple little heart would, he divined, demand but little else. . . . Could he not sacrifice himself, mask all the bitterness of his cynicism—the tragic aridity of his heart? Would not that, after all, prove a finely modern part?

"Emily," he murmured, drawing her face to his, "dear little Emily."

She laughed—a low, rippling laugh.

"Oh, Mr. Perkins, what a way you have, to be sure!"

"You 're no longer cross with me? You don't think badly of me?"

"I sha'n't tell you what I think of you. It might make you think too much of yourself," she answered coquettishly.

"You don't know how lonely, how isolated my life is, Emily."

"Well, I have noticed you seem sort of sad-like and dreadful down on your luck. I don't see why you should be though. You've a nice position."

"I can't explain to you now, Emily. Some day, perhaps, you 'll understand."

"I believe it's reading too many books. I knew a girl who went just the same way. I never could see the sense of all this book-reading myself."

He laughed gently, assuring himself that such artlessness was quaintly charming.

"Never mind, Emily; you must be patient and bear with me. You will, won't you, Emily darling?"

She paused, then asked gravely—

"What's up now?"

"If only I had a real friend," he went on dreamily; "an honest, loyal little friend—a friend like you, Emily—a friend who would be patient and bear with me."

"You talk that vague-like, Mr. Perkins, I don't know exactly what to say. I 'm sure we're chummy enough."

"Call me Trevor," he whispered.

"I'm a funny sort of a girl," she continued, "but I do like to know where I am with folks. I've kept company before, you know, and I like folks to mean what they say."

"And you don't believe in me—in my sincerity?" he asked bitterly.

"Oh, you're too deep for me, Mr. Perkins," she answered shortly.

"You're not going to quarrel with me, Emily?" he expostulated.

"Oh, Lord! I'm sure I can't see anything to quarrel about. You do jump at things so, Mr. Perkins."

"Then you don't think badly of me after all?"

"You are a rum sort and no mistake," she concluded.

He looked down at her. The moonlight was playing on her face: her skin, he thought, looked white as driven snow. and, all at once, he felt his whole being throb with a mad, passionate yearning. The whole world, so he fancied, swam before his eyes: he took her into his arms, and he kissed her with a fierce and feverish desperation. Yet, even in this wild moment of ecstasy, he retained a vivid consciousness of the relativeness of things, and more than ever he realised the profundity of his disillusionment.

"Oh! Trevor dear," she expostulated softly, "I am so happy!"

"Are you, darling?" he answered with a vague uneasiness.

Then, bending over her, he kissed her again.

"You are a spoony man," she exclaimed with a brusque laugh.

Yet, after all, he debated with himself, why should he tell her that he had no heart to give her? Why should he spoil this short moment of her delight? Why should he not play his part to the end with a desperate and cynical recklessness? . . . And yet—and yet, as the thought formulated itself, he felt his better self rise in revolt. She trusted him . . . she loved him, perhaps. . . . And once more the temptation returned.

This time he faced it without flinching. He felt her warm, soft hand steal its way into his, and, with a supreme effort, he determined to be true to his better self.

He became conscious of the return of his self-possession. And all at once he felt strangely cool—master of himself: he realised that he had definitely reconquered his personality.

He seemed to see the vast obscurity of the Park, peopled with a multitude of wandering lovers, and there welled up in his heart that great compassion for the helplessness of humanity of which he had read in books. He understood all the pitifulness of human love, its crude, primitive basis, the curiously blinding glamour of its endless elaboration.

Her head rested on his shoulder, and her hat, pushed all awry, shaded her face from the white light of the moon. Her eyes were closed, her lips listlessly parted, and her plump, girlish frame throbbed in silence with all the tremulous rhythm of her hurried breath. He watched her, and

there stole over him a certain subtle pride in his own power of tranquil self-detachment. And because of this self-satisfaction of his he pitied her vaguely, for the helplessness of her emotion and for the unconsciousness of his own attitude towards her. And, letting his thoughts drift onwards, he brooded aimlessly on the whole fragility of woman.

Yet, a moment later, he heard himself saying to her, with supreme inconsequence—

"Dearest Emily, you do care for me a little?"

She nodded mutely—gave him a long, slow look; then closed her eyes again wearily.

"My own dear little Emily," he went on, tenderly.

"Dear Mr. Perkins, you don't mean that," she murmured.

"Of course I do. You are the whole world to me," he protested hastily.

For a long while they remained locked in silent embrace. By and by the soldier and the woman at the other end of the bench, rising to go, roused them.

"We must be thinking of moving," he said abruptly.

"Oh, no! Not yet. It's so jolly here!" she answered.

He acquiesced with a strange, sudden impatience, and started to wonder, after his old cynical fashion, how it would all end for him. . . .

The faint notes of a distant clock tower floated through the still, warm air. . . .

"I really must be getting home," he began five minutes later.

"Oh, dear, must you really!" she asked reproachfully. "What a fidget you are! Why, it's only ten o'clock."

He put his arm around her, she laid her head on his shoulder, and together they moved away slowly down the stately moonlit avenue.

WITH THE TIDE.

The tide went out with a sob and a sigh—
  Speak low, my dear, speak low—
Without word or tear was their last good-bye;
Yet hearts may break although eyes be dry—
  Speak low, my dear, speak low

What's for a woman except to wait—
  Winds are wild and nights are dark;
Love is a fever that's fiercer than hate,
It burned in her veins from early till late—
  Winds are wild and nights are dark.

She watched the waves in their ebb and flow—
  Life is long to a waiting heart;
And dreamed the story she dared not know
All the dreary day till the sun was low—
  Life is long to a waiting heart.

And one grey dawn when the cold night died—
  Speak low, my dear, speak low—
An empty boat reached the old pier side;
And a girl's soul fled with the outward tide—
  Speak low, my dear, speak low.

E. FOSTER.

A CHAT WITH SIR WILLIAM MARTIN CONWAY ON MOUNTAINEERING.

By JOHN FOSTER FRASER.

THE last evening Sir William Martin Conway was in England, before setting out as leader of the expedition organised to penetrate the hitherto unexplored regions of Spitzbergen, I was at his house listening to his enthusiasm about the delights of mountaineering, not only in the Alps but in the far-off Himalayas, where he reached a higher altitude than any other climber has yet attained, standing on a peak 23,000 ft. above sea-level; and then speaking hopefully, but still a little anxiously, about his Spitzbergen trip. To-day, when these lines are read, Sir Martin is almost as much cut off from the world as though he were at the North Pole itself—mid sleet and ice, fog and rain, living on canned meats and sleeping in a Mummery tent about six feet long by four wide and two high, undergoing hardships and privations, and with no chance of getting away from that frost-bound land till a month hence, when a vessel will be sent to Advent Bay to pick him and his companions up and bring them home.

Certainly the change from his delightful residence, the Red House, at the top of Hornton Street, opposite High Street, Kensington Station, and which was formerly the home of Mr. John Hare, to the bleak hills of Spitzbergen is a big jump. For the house is charmingly cosy and comfortable, almost packed with art treasures and curiosities collected in odd corners of the world on travel-expeditions, while on the vestibule walls and the walls of the study are many fascinating pictures of mountain scenery painted by McCormick, who accompanied Sir Martin Conway on his Himalayan expedition.

At first Sir Martin would not strike you as the sort of man physically capable of arduous climbs and of sleeping among the snow. He is of quite medium stature, inclined, if anything, to be slim. He is as restless as a schoolboy, and cannot remain two minutes together sitting in a chair. He must keep walking up and down. Sitting, he seems ill at ease, and talks hesitatingly; but the moment he is on his feet and pacing the study from one end to the other, his words come freely; and when he gets on a clear run of narrative, you become conscious he is arranging his thoughts and words, for it is not conversation, but almost like the dictation of a chapter in one of his books. Indeed, he told me that he wrote his books marching about the room.

One thing you soon notice. He has the climber's walk—that is, a gentle roll of the body, with no unequal steps, but swinging his legs with rhythmic precision. And then you notice that, although a slim man, he is a tough man, full of energy, and with iron muscles. There is a settled air of determination upon his somewhat sallow countenance—in the firmness of the lips beneath the black moustache and the hard chin, while his dark eyes are alternately eager, inquiring, and impatient. But over and above all is his restlessness, as though he must be ever on the move. This is probably the key-note to his mountaineering career, which has induced him to scour the Alps from end to end, climb Pioneer Peak in the Himalayas, and push his way to the inhospitable fastnesses of desolate Spitzbergen.

A good mountaineer, however, is not to be judged by the lofty summits he has reached. The mountaineer is marked by the man who avoids danger rather than invites it. Hill-climbing is the most exciting of sport. Great climbers like Conway, Coolidge, Freshfield, and Fitzgerald, go far for their experiences. But there is plenty of good climbing to be got in the British Isles, up the west coast of Scotland in March, or even in the Lake District, when snow and frost have wrapped Westmorland in a cloak of glistening white. I have spent a thrilling hour crawling undignified upon my stomach round a narrow ice-burnished ledge on the Langdale Pikes, and found the experience quite as breathless and blood-tingling as Alpine climbing.* I

* See "Mountaineering in Westmorland," *English Illustrated Magazine*, May 1895.

asked Sir Martin Conway if he had done any mountaineering in England or Scotland, and he said he had not. But he was delighted with the yearly increase in the number of people who take to climbing.

"It not only shows," he remarked, "a healthy love of adventure, but it proves there is a growing love to see Nature in her wild moods. Climbing for pleasure is quite a modern discovery. Mountains were formerly regarded as hindrances. Nobody cared to look upon them, nobody saw beauties in them; not a soul ever thought any personal delight could be obtained by clambering up a glacier, toiling through a snow-field, and running all sorts of risks till a high ledge was reached from which a glorious view of other white-crowned mountains could be seen. Why, it is only within this last half-century or so that mountaineering as mountaineering has jumped into popularity. Of course, there are hundreds of people who go mountaineering who were never intended for climbers: there are those who climb because they think it is fashionable; there are the reckless holiday-makers, who think no precautions are necessary. All these are not mountaineers proper. Mountaineering is an art acquired after a long apprenticeship; and, speaking as a man who for the last twenty-one years has been constantly climbing, I can say I am far more careful now than ever I was."

SIR W. MARTIN CONWAY.

"But you don't object to people who can only snatch a month or six weeks every year enjoying themselves climbing in Switzerland?"

"Oh, by no means. But the point I wanted to make was that so many of these people run unnecessary risks simply by not studying the art of climbing—not putting themselves under a proper apprenticeship, as it were—and so are guilty of the rashest folly, which sometimes ends disastrously. In my time I have been in a good many tight corners, and I have never quite seen the fascination of wilfully running into danger, although, of course, one has an instinctive satisfaction in overcoming obstacles."

"What would you describe as the equipment necessary for a man who desires to become a mountaineer, say in the Alps?"

"Well, clothing is the first consideration, but little special outfit is needed for the Alps. Tweed or woollen goods are the best, and a Norfolk jacket is advisable, because it is warm and loose-fitting, and can be worn with or without a waistcoat. Knickerbockers, with very thick stockings, would do; and if the new climber is fond of coming down hills as I have seen some men come down, it might be well for him

A BIT OF MOUNT BLANC.

to have a double seat to his trousers. Boots are of the utmost importance, well nailed with wrought-iron nails, and the soles projecting a little distance from the uppers. Flannel shirts should be worn, and thick gloves, and a pair of smoked glass spectacles are indispensable. I prefer a haversack to a knapsack, because the weight does not pull so much at one's shoulders. Then there is the ice-axe used to cut steps, and the rope to fasten the climbers to each other in case of slipping. But, after all, the Alps do not require any very great preparation to climb."

Since Sir Martin Conway has conquered the Himalayas I am afraid he has come to regard the Alps as somewhat small fish. And one can quite appreciate this feeling. In Switzerland you start climbing from your hotel door; away in the North of India, however, the mountaineer has long days of journeying through a rough country before he comes to his mountains. So it is not merely a climb but an expedition, with dozens of carriers and assistants. It is only after many weeks that the climbing proper begins; therefore there is no comparison between the Alps and the Himalayas.

"An expedition such as that to the Himalayas and the one I am taking to Spitzbergen is very much like an army," said Sir Martin. "It goes on its belly. Arrangements for transporting food have far more to do with success than daring or skill. More than half the great expeditions that have failed have failed for no other reason than lack of provisions. Properly feeding your expedition is the great thing."

"What advice would you give to the man about to set out hill-climbing?"

"It may seem a small matter," replied Sir Martin; "but the first thing one should learn to do is to walk properly. You should not go on your toes, springing up, for that brings a tension on the small muscles in the calf of the leg, which soon tire. A swinging step, with a slight sway of the body, is the most comfortable plan. There is the use of the rope, which is rather difficult. A length of sixty feet is sufficient for three men. Two men mountaineering should not be roped together, and the number on each rope should not exceed four. Three is the best. It wants a trained mountaineer to know the time to put on the rope. Going over the easiest-looking places it is well to be prepared, for there are crevasses constantly occurring in the best-known routes. A beginner is generally bothered with the rope. It is either getting in his way, or he allows it to get in the way of his companions. A coil

NEARING A SUMMIT.

or two should be carried in the left hand, to give play to the man in front of you, for it is impossible to keep step going over uneven ground. Yet good mountaineers can often go immense distances without once allowing the rope to touch the snow."

"A study of the weather is not a bad thing, is it?"

"No. In hilly countries, however, it is most difficult to tell how the weather is going to turn out. Sometimes you think it threatening, and then in an hour the clouds pass away and you find you have been wasting good time in not pushing on. Still, the old adage, altered to suit the circumstances, holds good: 'A red sky at night is the climber's delight; a red sky in the morning is the climber's warning.' There is a wind which all Alpine climbers dislike, called the Föhn, blowing warm from the south-east. Little mountaineering can safely be done when it blows. The direction of the clouds has to be studied, but you must only take notice of the higher strata. A very blue sky is frequently an indication of coming bad weather. Mists are not uncommon, and generally suggest a halt, but if you notice a blue tint you may as well go on, for the mist is likely to clear."

"You seem, then, to regard the pleasure of mountaineering as a serious thing rather than as only a pastime?"

"Yes, I think I do. To become a really good mountaineer you must not regard it as a mere idle pastime. There is so much to be learnt, even if you are not a scientist, that you must approach it seriously. When you set out for a climb it is always well to have a definite plan, and a leader, whose decision should be law. It is popularly thought that coming down a mountain is more difficult than ascending. So it is with a beginner, but after some experience you find it is really easier."

TREACHEROUS GROUND.

"You would advise a man to study mountaineering under a guide?"

"Most certainly. Yet I would not urge that he place too much reliance on the guide, but let him gain information for himself. What I would suggest to a beginner is that he spend his first season in a great mountaineering centre climbing with a guide. Then the next season, in company with a couple of friends more experienced than himself, he starts on expeditions. But there are a hundred and one things every man must learn for himself, and which cannot be taught. The observant man, who is also fitted by nature for climbing, will soon experience the absorbing fascination of conquering mountains."

Then Sir Martin, never ceasing to stride his study as though he must get over a certain space within a given time, began to tell me some of his own adventures, both in the Alps and the Himalayas. Some folks thought, he said, that it must be terribly cold fighting one's way through snow. On the contrary, it was particularly warm, the sunburn often being intolerable. Your face, with the glare of the sun, gets burnt and swollen, your eyes bloodshot, while your clothes are draggled and dirty, and altogether you are a miserable wreck. But these trifles never daunt the spirit of a true climber.

The scenery in the Himalayas he describes as altogether different from that of the Alps. There are great masses of rent granite, the precipices scarred, and torrents roaring down the gorges. Besides, there is the terribly laborious climb over hundreds of miles away from civilisation before you get near the hills you want to ascend. And yet, he assured me, there was much to compensate. To the man who loves the impressiveness of wild scenery with marvellous cloud effects the Himalayas is the place for him. Sir Martin recalled with enthusiasm the day when the mountains behind Mikiel showed through the clouds like a great white throne set in heaven. Even when journeying with a number of companions he loves to escape for an hour or so and climb some peak and look out over the snowy vastness alone. Going from Astor to Gilgit he reached a point affording a magnificent view of the Valley of the Indus, covered with rocks swept down from the hills by countless floods and walled with enormous cliffs, which were a maze of precipices and gullies, while the river wound through the gorge like a twisted blue ribbon dusted with white wherever there were rapids. He was frequently stricken and overpowered with the awful majesty of the hills.

In reply to a question of mine as to how so much débris gathered on hillsides, he said it was due to the rapid variation of temperature. Frequently, when a very cold night follows a very cold day, the mountains can be heard cracking, and the alternate expansion and contraction not only break large masses, but tend to disintegrate their parts.

"What is the most difficult thing in mountaineering?" I asked. "It is not the mere climbing of steep places, is it?"

"The hardest work is crossing a glacier. You see, you have so often to travel over rotten snow, and there is the constant risk of avalanches, besides which, most of the time you are floundering and glissading, never quite knowing where the next step is going to land you. A falling avalanche is a grand sight when it comes tumbling down a distance of maybe eight thousand feet. There is a roar like the booming of

THE GREAT MITRE.

artillery, and you have simply to run for your lives like wild men, and often you jump crevasses which in cold blood you would never dream of attempting. Ice falls are common in the Alps, but not nearly so common as in the Himalayas. I travelled over the longest glaciers in the world, and the difficulty was that they were not merely crevassed, but were powdered into loose lumps of ice wedged into the jaws of vast abysses and overhung by tottering masses. But the worst of all my troubles were the mud avalanches, when monstrous rocks weighing many tons came rolling down at the rate of about seven miles an hour. In the Hispar Pass when you have reached an altitude of some 15,000 ft. you get some lovely effects, the white peaks of the mountains standing against a purple background, the shadows of the snow being blue, while the crevasses of the main glacier are defined by harmonious shades of soft grey. I shall never forget the view when we halted on the top of Hispartan (17,650 ft.). Then, you know, I went up the Baltoro glacier to a height of over 18,000 ft."

SLOW PROGRESS OVER A GLACIER.

"Did not the rarity of the air affect you?"

"Not so long as I kept myself out of any cramped position. I suffered very little inconvenience if I kept my chest free so that the lungs might expand to their utmost limits. But if the man in front gave a tug at the rope and thus constricted the chest, or if at the moment of making an unusual effort I held my breath, as one naturally does, then a slight sensation of giddiness would supervene."

"It has often struck me," I observed, "how guides develop special intelligence, and so follow the faintest tracks over long distances."

"I don't think it is a special intelligence at all," replied Sir Martin Conway. "This power of following a track is really due to an absence of intelligence. A good climber can dispense with a guide, but if he is an observant man he, of course, gazes about. On the other hand, a guide, with a blank mind, can keep his attention fixed on the details of stones and other things step by step."

"How long were you climbing in the Himalayas?"

"I spent eighty-four days on snow and glacier. During that time I traversed from end to end the three longest known glaciers in the world, outside the Polar regions, and I landed on the summit of Pioneer Peak, which is 23,000 ft., the greatest height yet reached by man, and I obtained a photograph of the mountain known as K 2, which is the second highest in the world. The view from Pioneer Peak, looking over infinite distance, was magnificent."

"And to-morrow you are off to Spitzbergen?"

"Yes; but is it not strange that the place, which is within comparatively easy reach, has never been properly explored? Hope I'll get back all right? Well, I hope so, too. I daresay before I see you again the little expedition will have had some exciting times. We are prepared for plenty of bad weather, fog, snow, and rain, and although we shall have no portable houses, there are some excellent small tents, besides reindeer sleeping-bags."

And so I bade good-bye to one of the most intrepid of explorers. But no sooner will he have returned to England than he starts making plans for another big journey, for he hopes to get through two, if not three, great expeditions before a General Election gives him an opportunity of seeking the less exciting occupation of becoming a Member of Parliament.

GREAT MEN IN LITTLE WORLDS.

By GEORGE GISSING.

V.—THE SCHOOLMASTER'S VISION.

IN the quarter of an hour before morning school, Mr. Donne, as was his wont, paced a strip of garden within view of the playground. He was bareheaded, and his magisterial gown, scarcely stirred by the breath of a calm, bright sky, draped him with the dignity he loved. His hands behind him—shapely hands, white and soft—his head inclined, and his features set in meditative mildness, Mr. Donne presented the ideal of head-mastership. He was the man with whom no boy would take a liberty, who ruled by spiritual awe (scornful of baser method), and in whom his mature associates respected the bland union of erudition and high breeding.

With half attention his eye remarked two youngsters who were approaching him; one of them, a lad of twelve, at length stepped up to the wicket by which Mr. Donne was passing, and respectfully made known his wish to be heard.

"What is it, Rogers?"

"If you please, Sir, Argent would like to speak to you."

"Certainly. Why need Argent send an ambassador? Ask him to come into the garden."

Rogers withdrew, and his companion, a pale, timid boy, two years younger, came forward. Willie Argent was in his first term, and still regarded the head master with dread rather than veneration. Having passed the wicket, he stood in a paralysed attitude, unable to raise his eyes or to utter a sound.

"Well, Argent," said Mr. Donne kindly, "what is it? You had a letter this morning, I think. Any news you wish to tell me?"

The poor little lad feebly commanded his tongue.

"Yes, Sir—please, Sir. It was from Mamma. She's coming to see me."

"Indeed? I'm very glad to hear it. When will she come?"

"To-day, Sir—some time—most likely the afternoon."

Mr. Donne knew nothing of Mrs. Argent save that she was a widow, and had for some years been living in France. The boy was placed with him by a relative residing at Bristol, a merchant of good position, whose house was Willie's home. These circumstances had excited no interest in Mr. Donne, and it was now perhaps for the first time that he carefully regarded the lad's countenance. Willie Argent had pretty, girlish features, indicative of delicate sensibilities, and of a nervous system altogether out of tone. When he had spoken a few more words, and had dismissed the pupil to his play, the schoolmaster mused a while on the probable character and appearance of Mrs. Argent. In all likelihood, a not very estimable woman; careless, perhaps, of her child—coming to see him merely when it suited her convenience. The boy did not seem particularly pleased. "Mamma" sounded awkwardly on his lips. Well, it was something, however trivial, to vary the monotony of the day. As he heard the school-bell begin to clang, Mr. Donne sighed. He turned from the garden with a weary reluctance, far more difficult to overcome than the spirit of the boys which bade them revolt against imprisonment on such a morning as this. From the steps of the private door he looked for a moment over a wide prospect of fields and woods, where on the horizon lay a murky cloud. That was Bristol. The city had no special attraction for him, but, in default of better resort, Mr. Donne would gladly have spent a truant day among the shops and shipping. But his "senior Greek" awaited him.

The school had a moderate reputation. Fifteen years ago, soon after he left the University, and simultaneously with his marriage, Mr. Donne became its proprietor, deciding hurriedly upon a career

for which everyone assured him that he was well fitted. As, indeed, he was, though—a common case—he might have done better in other walks of life. Marriage obliged him to decide in haste; otherwise, there would have been both time and opportunity for experimental efforts. While yet an undergraduate he had become engaged to a girl of his own rank, and the prospect of domestic happiness overcame all other considerations. For this also Mr. Donne had abundant capacity. Youth entangled him in no passionate perplexities; nothing in his history asked for concealment; he married at the bidding of a tranquil, steadfast love, and found no reason to repent his choice. It was only that he might have done so much better not to marry at all—the common case.

Three children were born to him; all lived and were growing up in health. But the mother had been dead some six years. It was the result of a boating accident. Saved from drowning, Mrs. Donne died of an illness that followed upon the shock.

He thought of her with a tender regret, and, could a word have brought her to his side again, would joyfully have spoken it. And yet, and yet, he had long ceased to suffer under his bereavement. He thought of himself as a man to whom the world still offered richer opportunities than he had hitherto known; it might be that Providence—such is the mould of some men's reflection—had designedly released him from an unsuitable bond. Poor Rachel was not exactly the wife for him; he had known it long before her death. An admirable woman; so sweet of temper, so loyal, so modest, so "right-thinking," but with not a spark of originality, and hopelessly astray in any sphere but that of home. After living with her for a few months he could anticipate all her views, her very phrases, with entire certainty. She thought of everything from one unchangeable point of view; the propriety of her sentiments defeated criticism; her conduct was flawless. And what more could a man desire in his wife? Mr. Donne many a time and oft rebuked himself for secret impatience. His perturbed mind presently gave admission to the strangest fancies. If only it was permissible to cherish the wife of one's bosom, and at the same time to let one's eyes wander in search of —— But the dissolute thought could have no abiding place in a mind of such integrity.

Mr. Donne's sister, a discreet domestic lady of something more than forty maiden years, now kept house for him, and relieved him of all minor cares about his children. As for the school, it might have prospered more decidedly under more energetic governance; the head-master taught only one or two classes, and these, not seldom, with a rather noticeable languor; but his assistants were well chosen, and he held his supremacy in a way which allowed no one to suspect that at heart he so often despised himself and all his functions. He had the grand manner, shaped on the best academic tradition. Though not in orders, he could on occasion discourse with the true clerical impressiveness; but of late years he was grown chary of exercising this talent to the full; his admonitions, public and private, were marked by a more secular tone than during Mrs. Donne's lifetime.

About eleven o'clock this morning, as he sat in his study trying to write letters, but actually overcome with a singular listlessness, it was announced that a lady—Mrs. Argent—would like to see him. He rose at once.

"Miss Donne is engaged, I suppose?"

"Yes, Sir. The lady is in the drawing-room."

Thither he at once betook himself, thinking not at all of Mrs. Argent as an interesting person or otherwise, but glad of the event as a distraction to his oppressive mood. As he entered the room, and became aware of its occupant, he felt a shock of surprise; there rose before him a lady whom he would never have imagined to be the mother of a boy ten years old; so fresh her complexion, so slim and lithe her figure, so spirited her whole aspect, that one would naturally have taken her for six-and-twenty at most. She was dressed, too, in an unfamiliar costume, with curiously short skirts. Before the schoolmaster could offer any greeting, Mrs. Argent, stepping forward with delightful frankness, her hand extended, addressed him almost gaily, as though they were old acquaintances.

"I am so afraid, Dr. Donne, that I have timed my visit awkwardly. But, really, the morning was so delightful, and—the fact is I have run down from Bristol on my machine—my bicycle. I thought at first of spending the time somehow till afternoon; but I really ought to be back again before evening. If you *will* forgive me—and allow my little son to play truant for once——"

Mr. Donne (not for the first time was he styled Doctor) found himself regarding the lady's skirts and her wonderful feet with

BEFORE THE SCHOOLMASTER COULD OFFER ANY GREETING, MRS. ARGENT, STEPPING FORWARD WITH DELIGHTFUL FRANKNESS, HER HAND EXTENDED, ADDRESSED HIM ALMOST GAILY, AS THOUGH THEY WERE OLD ACQUAINTANCES.

indecorous fixity: he became a trifle confused, and at first could murmur only the indispensable words of politeness. The accidental peculiarity of Mrs. Argent's mode of travelling seemed to obscure for the moment her more essential characteristics. It was not until she had spoken again, praising the site of the school, that he became fully conscious of her very charming voice and manner and bearing. The Puritan strain in him prompted disapproval. After all, she was doubtless the neglectful mother he had supposed; a frivolous, sportive creature, enjoying life in her own way, and throwing her natural responsibilities on to other shoulders. His countenance betrayed the thought, even though he was endeavouring to shape it into such a smile as might be worn by a man of the world.

"Your son will be delighted. He expected you, I think, only in the afternoon——"

"Yes. Impatience has always been my fault. But what do you think of him, Dr. Donne? Not much life in him I'm afraid? This air ought to brace him up."

The schoolmaster delivered himself with professional gravity of certain rounded periods, and, even whilst he spoke, abused himself inwardly for owlishness. Effort was vain; he could not assume a natural demeanour and, as he wished, converse with this interesting lady in her own spirit. Awed, no doubt, by a dignity which seemed expressly meant for her edification, Mrs. Argent grew more sedate, more self-conscious.

"You will be able, I trust," hummed the head master, "to give us the pleasure of your company at luncheon. My sister——"

Mrs. Argent accepted with formal amiability, using few words; and thereupon Mr. Donne withdrew to apprise Willie and send him to his mother.

Parent and child were together for half an hour in the drawing-room, and at length entered to them Miss Donne, who left no hospitable duty or grace undischarged.

"Willie wants to see me on my bicycle," said Mrs. Argent, "so we'll go out together for an hour. The run will do him good, I daresay."

To Miss Donne the lady's manner touched upon condescension, had the unmistakable air of social superiority; a tone which might be held to justify itself, for Mrs. Argent diffused about her an atmosphere of wealth and fashion. The head master's sister was able to observe her from a window as she rode away on the bicycle, slowly, skilfully, the little lad trotting by her side; and presently she exchanged comments with Mr. Donne. "An unusual sort of person," remarked the schoolmaster, in an absent voice. "Of the newest type, I presume." And he would add little to this opinion. Miss Donne concluded, with satisfaction, that he thought more of Mrs. Argent than he cared to say.

On their return at the luncheon hour, mother and son sat side by side in Mr. Donne's dining-room. Willie's face showed an unwonted animation; though voiceless and unable to eat, he smiled with pleasure, and constantly sought his mother's eyes. The head master was able at length to note a likeness between the two, but he still marvelled at the lady's seeming youth; she and Willie might have been brother and sister. Mrs. Argent's talk, bright and entertaining, had no reference whatever to domestic affairs. She spoke of a recent journey she had made in a little-known part of Europe; then of meetings with people whom it interested Mr. Donne to hear of—politicians, learned men, celebrated women. The schoolmaster's eyes brightened; insensibly he took more claret than usual, and when the inevitable end drew near he felt a profound despondency.

"You think of making your home in this part of England, Mrs. Argent?" he asked, leaning forward a little.

"Oh, no!" she answered, with a smile which suggested some special meaning. "I return to London to-morrow, and—— most likely I shall leave England again—for a time."

The schoolmaster's spirits sank; even his features betrayed a disappointment, though he forced himself to smile continuously. But he still had an hour's enjoyment of Mrs. Argent's company. Willie, dismissed the while, came back again to sit with his mother in the drawing-room until it was time for her to leave. Mrs. Argent proposed returning to Bristol as she had come.

"You don't cycle, Dr. Donne?"

The man would have given half his substance to be able to mount at her side. His jaw became rigid.

"Oh, I beg your pardon! It would hardly be——"

"Merely my neglect of rational exercise," interposed the schoolmaster quickly. "No point of etiquette is involved, I assure you."

When the moment came, he accompanied her into the garden, watched her wheel out the machine and spring to her seat with perfect grace, strode by her as far as to the gate, and stood bareheaded as she swept away, the boy running and leaping in her track. Then he went straight to his study.

There had vanished the very ideal of his dreaming soul—or perhaps of his restless, hungered emotion. A woman such as this he had never met—never even in the days long ago, before his marriage, when he mixed freely in the world. To him Mrs. Argent was indeed of a new type; and no woman had ever so wrought upon his imagination.

It might be—nay, undoubtedly it was the fact—that she fell far below ethical perfection; she was probably selfish at the core, incapable of the nobler feelings, a a mere flash of superficial brilliance. She cared little or nothing for her child; desired only not to be troubled by him. For all that—a woman! And Mr. Donne felt as though he had lived hitherto without consciousness of woman's existence. His eyes dazzled; his blood became a rushing torrent.

With angry contempt he swept aside his old scholastic judgment of female excellence. A simple maiden, a humdrum housewife, an indefatigable mother—yes, yes, all very good in their way; but man is man, and woman is woman, and love is something other than domestic tranquillity. Had he but known himself and life before the marriage which made of him a respectable piece of mechanism! The mere thought that he might have lived to love, and be loved by, such a woman as Mrs. Argent shook him with a frenzy.

He struggled to command himself; the mental habits of a lifetime would not utterly yield to calenture such as this—natural and pardonable in a very young man, but in one who had turned his fortieth year a mere depravity of the senses. He tried to fix his thoughts on the routine of the day, but the effort merely increased his loathing for customary occupations. From the cricket-field sounded voices of the boys at play, and he wished to stop his ears against them. There came into his mind the contemptuous word "pedagogue," and he kept repeating it. A pedagogue he; no man at all, but a pedagogue; presumed, in the nature of things, to be passionless, arid—a guide-post to examinations and all the virtues. In the end his torture became intolerable; he could combat no longer in this stifling atmosphere of classics and dictionaries; without a word to anyone he prepared himself as if for an ordinary walk, and set out by a field-path, leaving the school behind him as quickly as possible.

Until of late he had always kept himself in good physical condition; that was part of his duty as a head master, as an exemplar; but now, for a month or two, he had all but foregone custom of exercise. The warm spring, following on a severe winter, relaxed his muscles, and a corresponding state of mind drew him into habits of indolence. After walking half a mile at brisk speed he felt tired and breathless. Indignant at this new revolt of the flesh, fiercely determined to subdue his body, he strode along until the sweat streamed from him. He had reached higher ground; a sea wind blew upon his face, and gave him an access of vigour. On he went, careless of direction, so long as he moved farther and farther from the hated school.

As the sun sank, he looked about him for an inn where he could eat and drink. The house into which he at length turned afforded better accommodation than he had hoped for; on an impulse, while sitting over his meal, he asked whether he could have a room there for the night, and without difficulty obtained it. Very well, he would grant himself these few hours of liberty. His absence from home would cause surprise, and, perhaps, a little uneasiness; no matter; as early as possible in the morning a telegram should set his sister's mind at rest.

Weary as he was, he again strolled about dark lanes, where now and then a perfume made his soul faint within him. When at length he went to bed, fatigue and the strangeness of his surroundings allied themselves with mental excitement to forbid sleep. On the staircase, for a long time, there sounded a whispered conversation; the giggling of a girl ever and again sent a hot flush through his veins. Then, of a sudden, heavy slumber overcame him.

He passed into a dream-world, more feverish and phantasmal than that in which he had been agonising. First of all came a sense of speeding through vast spaces, he knew not by what mode of locomotion; beside him sped — not a person, but a voice. A woman's voice, clear as a silver bell, ever rising to the note of merry laughter. And it seemed to urge him on, until the exhausting violence of his efforts made him aware that he was

SHE SWEPT AWAY, THE BOY RUNNING AND LEAPING IN HER TRACK.

neither running nor flying, but—riding on a bicycle. He marvelled at his sudden skill in the management of this machine. "Do I ride well?" he shouted, against the wind that all but stopped his breath. And the answer was a gay, echoing laugh, which shook him with such delirium of passion that he started up from the bed, and half awoke.

Now he was climbing, still unutterably fatigued, but resolute in advance, though it cost him his life; for the same voice still accompanied him, inflamed his blood, and made his brain whirl with rapture. The dream was in part a reminiscence of bygone holidays in Switzerland; he saw the gleaming summits, the pine-forests down below, and lower still the great expanse of a lake. With this blended the school-room legend of Orpheus. The voice—now behind him—was that of Eurydice. He knew that he must not turn to look upon her, or all was lost. "Follow me! Follow me!" he kept crying, and the answer was a reassuring laugh. "The peak—and you are mine!" To that rapturous exclamation there came no answer. Terror-stricken, he called again: "At the peak, you are mine!" The awful silence overwhelmed him; spite of himself, he turned, and, even as he did so, plunged into the gloom of fathomless depths. Again he woke, and lay trembling, bathed in sweat.

For what seemed a long time, he tried in vain to sleep. He wished for a renewal of the dreams, an agony yet a rapture. A cock crowed in the night; a horseman came galloping beneath the windows. Then all was quiet again, and again he slept.

He was once more on the bicycle, but this time had no control of it; he wriggled, tumbled, could not advance a yard, and fumed in the anguish of feeling himself, of making himself, ridiculous. Near him stood Mrs. Argent, holding her own machine as he had seen her just before she mounted to ride away from the school; but she wore a magnificent dress, such as would have become her on some brilliant occasion of festivity, her bosom bare, save for gleaming jewels, and her arms a glory of living flesh. She was beginning to show impatience. "Oh, can't you do better than *that*? You really must be quick; I can't wait for you." He made a desperate attempt to mount, but his eyes would not turn from the woman's beauty, and again he came ignominiously to the ground. Then she gave a loud, scornful laugh; he saw her spring to the saddle, bend her shining head, and float away. He pursued, and had strength to keep her in sight for a long way on a country road; ever calling, imploring, with wondrous vocabulary of passionate desire. All at once he saw by the roadside a little boy, who, without moving, held out his hands after the woman, and cried to her, "Mamma! Mamma!" At the pitiful sight, a great indignation possessed him. "Stop!" he shouted. "It's your own child! Stop!" But in that moment the radiant figure passed out of his sight. He heard the boy weeping bitterly, and he too wept.

Amid innumerable phases of less distinct nightmare, there came one which, even as he dreamt, alarmed him by its grotesque caricaturing of a solemn ceremony in his actual life. He saw himself in the study, closeted with a boy—or, rather, a young man—who was about to leave school, and to whom, his wont on such occasions, he was imparting grave advice. First of all came the accustomed injunctions, sober, paternal, altogether excellent. But presently he lost control of his tongue, which, as though at the prompting of a Mephistopheles, began to utter counsel such as appalled his own ear. "And now there is one point on which I feel obliged to touch, delicate though it may be. You are nineteen years of age; you are already going out into the world: the probability is that, before many years are over, you will think of marrying. My dear boy, let me beg of you, for your own sake, *not* to marry. Believe me, marriage is the curse of life. I mean it! Look at me, a horrible example. I married young, and forthwith I was condemned to a paltry routine existence such as my soul loathes. But for marriage, who knows to what heights I might have risen! Take warning! Marriage is the check upon civilisation. What men might do if only they remained free through all their active years! We find ourselves drudging to support wife and family, and it leaves us no strength for anything else. Besides—you are sure to marry the wrong woman. Imagine what it means, when you are irrevocably bound, to meet with your ideal in the other sex! That meeting always comes much later in life, and the bitterness of it! Of all my advice to you this is the most precious, because it comes of my own miserable experience. Store it in your mind and heart!" The young man said something, turned away, and went from the room. No sooner had he gone than the dreamer felt a revulsion. Unutterably shocked and ashamed, he

rushed after his pupil, meaning to obliterate that outrageous folly, to make a confession of temporary insanity—anything, so that the words might be unspoken. But he sought in vain all over the school-buildings, in the playground, the fields. He tore about, his gown flying in the wind—and with a choking shout returned to consciousness.

When morning glimmered at the windows he rose and dressed. What a night! It had effectually cured him of his erotic fever: for he ached throughout his body, and had a brain like lead. To make things worse, the weather had changed; rain was falling, and seemed likely to continue. He descended the stairs with uncertain step, and stood by the open door of the inn drinking fresh air. After a pretence of breakfast, a ramshackle conveyance bore him to the nearest railway-station, and he reached home about midday.

Miss Donne did not press for explanations. She was accustomed to regard her brother as wisdom in the flesh, and his strange worried look suggested matters too deep for her inquiry. The head master kept very much to himself for the rest of the day. He did nothing, and in his enforced idleness felt an older man.

The next morning he arose in a mood of indifference, ready to pursue the familiar course with little more than the wonted distaste. But something happened to affect the sluggish current of his thoughts. His youngest child, a little girl of seven, had fallen ill in the night; the symptoms were alarming, and a doctor had to be sent for. Mr. Donne felt his paternal affection revive, and throughout the day he had no temptation to think of Mrs. Argent, or of his recent extravagances.

The day after that, when his mind was eased somewhat regarding the child, he chanced in the afternoon to look into one of the smaller school-rooms. As soon as he pushed the door open he heard a sob. Within, at one of the desks, sat a boy with head bowed upon his arms, crying desolately. It was Willie Argent. The head master entered, closed the door, and from a short distance spoke with as much kindness as his voice could convey.

"What is the matter, my boy? Why are you crying?"

Willie gave a start, and sprang up. His face showed that he must have been here for some time indulging a bitter grief. Mr. Donne strove to reassure him; laid a hand on his shoulder; again speaking as gently as possible.

"Do you feel home-sick, Willie?"

"It's more that—that I haven't got a home," broke from the boy's quivering lips, with phrase and accents of sincerity which touched the hearer profoundly.

"Oh, don't think that! Be sure your mother will make a home for you before long."

Willie looked up, became shamefaced, struggled to speak, and, after more encouragement, brought forth the news which weighed so upon his heart.

"Mamma is going to be married, Sir."

Mr. Donne heard it without surprise or any other emotion.

"She told you so? Why, then, you will have a home so much the sooner."

"No, Sir. She said I should live with my uncle and aunt just the same."

The head master cleared his throat, again kindly patted the boy's shoulder, and began to discourse in set phrase.

"My dear Willie, you have begun your experience of the troubles of life rather early, it is true, but remember that all trials, all sorrows, are for our ultimate good. Boys are sent to school that they may learn many other things besides lessons out of books. One of these things is manly independence. I am sure your mother has a satisfactory purpose in arranging thus for you. Doubtless she has observed that you are inclined to cling too much to the comforts of home; she wishes to see you more like other boys—less sensitive, more vigorous. You are going through a period of rather hard discipline, but in the end you will reap a benefit. My boy, suffering is the price of all good things in this world. It is suffering that forms a manly character. It would never do if we had everything as we wished. The noblest minds have gone through the hardest discipline. . . ."

With much else to the same effect. And Mr. Donne did not believe a word of it. His inner voice accompanied the audible with a running comment. "Cant! Rubbish! Misery such as this never did anything but grievous harm to body and soul. Why haven't you the honesty to keep silence, where truth cannot be told?"

Of a sudden he recollected a portion of his dreams at the village inn, that grotesque interview with the boy who was leaving school. It had never recurred to his mind till now. He fell into abrupt silence.

Willie was no longer sobbing.

"I will try, Sir," he said, when Mr. Donne seemed to have ended his hortatory remarks.

"There's a brave lad! Come, now, you must go out and join in the boys' games. And—if ever you would like to speak to me in private about anything, don't be timid. Come to me whenever you see me walking in the garden. There's no reason whatever to be afraid of me, I assure you." The head master smiled, averting his look. "Come as to a friend, my dear boy, and I will do my utmost to help you in trouble such as this, or any other."

A day or two, and all was as before. Mr. Donne had lost no dignity in the eyes of his subjects; he swayed the sceptre with no less authority and grace than heretofore. If he knew himself somewhat better, that was a purely private affair; perhaps he murmured to himself the old philosopher's injunction, in Greek or in Latin, and felt that it had a fuller significance for him. But the strange experience in no way affected his conduct.

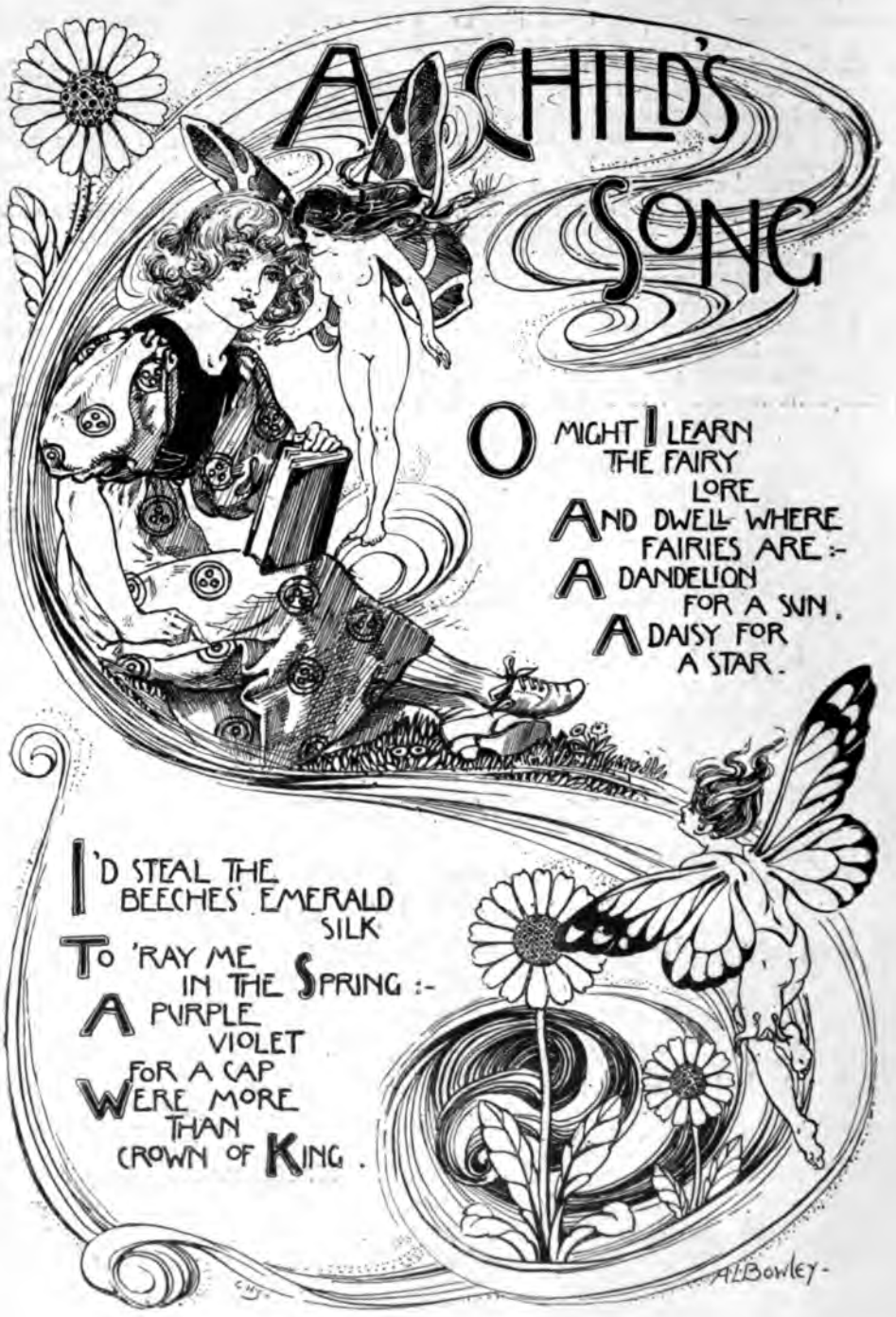
When the head boy left school Mr. Donne imparted his final counsel with even more unction than of wont.

"And one word more, of wider application. Whatever the path in which Providence directs you, cultivate a reasonable contentment. There is a spirit abroad—a spirit of restlessness, of revolt. Be not misled by it. However dull, however wearisome your appointed task, discharge it thankfully; for, I assure you, there's nothing so wholesome for man as steady and fruitful labour. Do not become the plaything of a restive imagination; always consult your calm reason; always——"

LOVE AND GRIEF.

Grief raised a tear-stained face to mine—
  Love, with a smile, looked up;
I drove Grief harshly from my path,
  And drained Love's sparkling cup.
Languid with sweet satiety
  I lay when day was done—
Then lo! Love raised her mask, and I
  Knew Love and Grief were one!

M. HEDDERWICK BROWNE.


A CHILD'S SONG
O MIGHT I LEARN
THE FAIRY
LORE
AND DWELL WHERE
FAIRIES ARE :-
A DANDELION
FOR A SUN.
A DAISY FOR
A STAR.
I'D STEAL THE
BEECHES' EMERALD
SILK
TO 'RAY ME
IN THE SPRING :-
A PURPLE
VIOLET
FOR A CAP
WERE MORE
THAN
CROWN OF KING.
A.L. Bowley.

THE TINIEST TUFT
OF THISTLE-
DOWN
SHOULD BE MY
SILVER STEED,
ABOVE THE WATERS
OF THE
LAKE
TO RIDE FROM REED
TO REED
O MIGHT I LEARN
THE FAIRY
LORE
AND DWELL WHERE
FAIRIES ARE :-
A DANDELION
FOR A SUN,
A DAISY FOR
A STAR.
WILFRID·WILSON·GIBSON
A·L·BOWLEY

Photo by Valentin, Madrid.

HIS MAJESTY ALFONSO XIII., KING OF SPAIN.

THE KING OF SPAIN.

By ARTHUR LYNCH

THE destiny of a great nation hangs upon the life of a very delicate boy. The young King of Spain, who has just completed his tenth year, is one of those monarchs, of whom Europe has seen many examples, who owe the security of their positions to their incapacity to govern. Were he double his present age and an active, vigorous young man, it is possible that he would find his throne in jeopardy; but, being only ten years old and of the frailest constitution, it would appear that he is one of the most secure of the rulers of the world.

To explain the balance of all the forces that keep his throne in equilibrium would lead too far from the immediate subject, and I will touch on politics only inasmuch as that may help to give a better impression of the young King and his surroundings. When I saw him first I was returning from a voyage during which I had the opportunity of making some study of that once mighty Spanish empire, and of considering the career of conquest of that race, the proudest, and perhaps the most brilliant, the world has ever known.

I arrived in Madrid full of the glories of her history, and experienced that mingled disappointment and delight that almost invariably seizes one on entering into a capital of which fine visions have been conjured up in the imagination. The Spanish people had the indefinable air of a down-trodden race, yet with an air also of the dignity and pride which is part of their heritage. Their glories are gone, and they are now lagging behind in that spirit of enlightenment and in actual education such as serves to distinguish our modern civilisation from all those that have preceded it.

Upon these reflections, however, I had arrived at the Royal Palace. It is a magnificent building, of the Classic style of architecture, gleaming with its white marble under the clear blue sky of Spain. Yet with its magnificence, the bareness of its surroundings, the unattractiveness of its general appearance as a dwelling-place, it looked to me rather like a big hotel or public institution. Lying within its scanty grounds, with no gardens, parks, or lawns to form an approach to its barren grandeur; flanked by paltry houses, and situated in an undistinguished quarter of the town near the shallow ditch which bears the famous name of the Manzanares, the Royal Palace looked somewhat forlorn in its splendour.

The King and the Queen-Regent were announced to leave the Palace at three o'clock that afternoon, in order to pay a visit to the Cathedral of Saint Isidore. Long before the appointed hour a considerable number of people, perhaps five hundred, had gathered in the gravelled courtyard called the Plaza de Armes, awaiting the appearance of their Majesties. It was just about the period of an Anarchist attack on the King of Portugal, and of Anarchist demonstrations both in Lisbon and Madrid. Yet no special precautions seemed to have been taken to prevent persons with sinister intentions entering the precincts of the Palace.

The Palace itself, it is true, is a perfectly contained fortress, opening only by massive doors well guarded, and presently, as the hour approached, a guard of soldiers were drawn up in double lines between which the royal carriage was to pass on its way from the Palace to the gate of the Plaza.

The soldiers resembled the French, both in general appearance and in uniform. They wore red breeches, green gloves, and képis like those of the French, and although their discipline seemed rather free and easy, there was no fault to be found with the physique of the men. Shortly afterwards a bodyguard of about twenty of the household troops, corresponding to the English Horse Guards, caracoled up towards the Palace door—well-made and handsome fellows, looking magnificent in their white-plumed helmets, with their white buckskin breeches, top-boots, white gloves and gauntlets. The élite of the Spanish troops certainly yield to none that I have seen. I have seen

bigger and more powerful-looking men in the English and German armies, but none that excelled the Spaniards in their appearance of lithe, sinewy strength, combined with an indescribable martial air that recalled the dashing and chevalieresque days that are gone.

The military band struck up the inspiriting notes of the national hymn; there was a great show of officiousness on the part of the officers; the men ceased to laugh and talk, and tried to put on a severe appearance of discipline; the door of the Palace swung open, and slowly the royal carriage rolled out between the lines. The Queen and the young King were sitting face to face. The Queen, who bowed continually from side to side, had nothing of regal aspect or distinction in her appearance. Neither tall nor short, nor stout nor thin, plainly dressed and plain in feature, Queen Maria Christina looked to be a woman who had had her full share of trouble in this world, and had been obliged to fight for her own hand. That, indeed, has been her history.

Married to Alfonso XII. after the death of his first love, the beautiful and beloved Mercedes, Maria Christina, the daughter of the late Archduke Charles of Austria, knew that the heart of her husband was never with her. A foreigner in a nation of people proud by nature and suspicious by reason of the events of their history, the new Queen could seek in her troubles but little consolation or guidance from her husband, but she set herself resolutely to the task of gaining the respect and confidence of the people and the affection of the brilliant but unsteady Alfonso XII. The cherished memory of the past did not prevent the fickle monarch from seeking distractions elsewhere, and the Court was the scene of frequent dramas of jealousy and reproach between the royal pair.

Maria Christina loved her consort, perhaps the more devotedly that that passion was repaid only by a cold esteem, and she mourned sincerely his untimely decease. It was after the death of Alfonso XII. that the little boy now Alfonso XIII. was born, May 17, 1886. Never was a life so frail. For weeks and months and years his health has needed the most constant attention, and during all that time his mother has been in constant attendance upon him. Her affection has in this case reaped its reward, for the little King seems now to give the promise of eventually reaching manhood's estate. His mother has often declared that when she dies the name Alfonso, so full of diverse memories of affection to her, will be found engraven on her heart.

Alfonso XIII., when I saw him first, seated in his carriage, was a pale, thin, and delicate-looking little fellow. With his fair hair, inclined to be curly, his blue eye, and his face gentle in its expression of languor, the little King reminded me of that Philip IV. made famous by the pencil of Velasquez. The thin lips were almost bloodless, the features seemed too fatigued to possess any definite expression, except for the far-off look of dreaming and patience in the eyes. He smiled, nevertheless, continuously, and rather drearily, and looked unmistakably bored. He seemed to be going through his afternoon's drive as he would go through any other of his innumerable royal duties, obediently but mechanically. He was dressed in a sailor costume, his head bare—a small head, moreover, giving no promise of intellect; and the little boy, looking like one in the first days of convalescence from some almost fatal fever, still smiled mechanically as the carriage rolled slowly on.

A small guard of officers rode by the carriage, receiving occasional petitions from the people who lined the route, and presenting these petitions ceremoniously to the King. Alfonso XIII. made some pretence of reading them, and signified his gracious interest in the matters concerned. I had saluted the little King in recognition of his smiling glance, not with any idea of homage to royalty but with a natural movement of sympathy for a gentle but sickly boy, and with a dim sense of the glories of a once mighty and noble line ending in this feeble and flickering life.

Subsequently I had frequent opportunities of learning details of the personal life of the royal family and of the political conditions which surround them.

Alfonso XIII. has an English governess amongst other instructors, but his education is under the direct and personal supervision of his mother. His exalted rank prevents him indulging in the usual sports of boyhood, and one of the stories related of him has a pathetic side in this respect. He was seen one day gazing with uncommon interest out of one of the windows of the royal palace in the direction of the Manzanares. He was asked what he was looking at, and he pointed out a couple of urchins who were busy and happy making mud-pies, and Alfonso XIII. begged, even with tears in his eyes, to be

allowed to go and make mud-pies with them. He was little consoled by the information that etiquette forbade Kings to indulge in pastimes so unexalted. At other times Alfonso takes his monarchy more seriously, and frequently clinches an argument by announcing autocratically, "I am the King."

The Queen is very devout in her religious observances, and it is also, of course, quite in the traditions of Spanish royalty that Alfonso should be brought up in the very atmosphere of the Faith. The Pope himself is his sponsor, and on the occasion of the little King's first communion the Holy Father sent him a special autograph letter. For some few days afterwards Alfonso was observed also to be very busy in literary duties, and at last he produced, in his boyish roundhand, a very fair autograph letter to the Pope in response. His mother looked over it, altered a misplaced capital letter, and handed it back. Alfonso was much chagrined at first, but, making a virtue of necessity, he said, "Well, after all, this is my first autograph letter to his Holiness, and he will think I made the correction myself. Let it go!"

Not long ago the King was taken to his first bull-fight. He was much pleased at first with the pomp and glitter and gorgeous pageantry that the Southern races know so well how to make effective, but when it came to the bull goring the defenceless horses with his "spears"—as they call the horns in bull-ring parlance—Alfonso turned pale, became much terrified, and demanded to be taken home. This display of aversion to the national sport of Spain made an unfavourable impression on the populace, and indeed, if the King had been a little older, it might have had serious political consequences.

It is at San Sebastian that the King and his mother are happiest. This Spanish watering-place is one of the prettiest imaginable, with a small protected bay—beyond which, at a short distance, booms the great Atlantic—and a wide margin of sandy beach. The Queen lives there for some weeks every year *en bourgeoise*, enjoying the sea-bathing herself, for she is an excellent swimmer, and allows the little King to gather some of the few real boyish pleasures of his life by capering about the strand and dabbling in the waves.

Recently Alfonso celebrated his tenth birthday, receiving the Ambassadors of the nations in true royal style, and paying the customary visits to various institutions, distributing money to the peasantry close to Madrid, and, attired as a military cadet, receiving the acclamations of the multitude.

In Madrid itself there is very little real fervour for royalty, but the irreconcilable Republicans are very few. The Opportunists and the moderate Republicans are in the ascendant, and they recognise that perhaps the best form of government for Spain is a Liberal *régime* during the minority of a King, and with a Queen as regent who has made herself respected for her private character, and who does not unduly interfere with matters of State. For all these reasons, and particularly because the military party favour it, it seems probable that, now that his health is stronger, Alfonso XIII. may look forward to attaining his majority as one of the best established and least retrograde of the monarchs of Spain with which this present century has endowed that sorely tried nation.

THE DAWN OF LOVE.—By Celia Levetus.

BETWEEN NIGHT AND DAY.

By ALGERNON GISSING.

LEAH screamed as, in running from the Saw-pit Green, a hand seized her in the darkness.

"'Ssh! . . . Leah, is it you?"

So firm was the grip that the startled girl for an instant mistook the nature of her assailant. The lowered urgent voice at once assured her upon this point, and she turned her fright into a resonant peal of laughter.

"Yes, what makes you so solemn, Jet?"

A sound like a muffled anathema from a jay came from the other's throat, and muttering "Come here," she drew her captive some paces away with her.

Dark and cold though these nights before Christmas were, there was fun in the village street. Cries and noisy laughter rent the air from different quarters, rose into the solid darkness, and floated away over the silent fields and up the hill to join the echoing mirth of the owls, who, too, seemed intent upon jollity in their own peculiar way. Nothing could be distinguished here except when a rushing figure darkened a cottage window which showed a light, or when any wag suddenly disconcerted a prankish maiden by the flash of a match.

Jet drew her friend away from the houses, not pausing until they reached an open piece of road below the village, where the absence of hedges and trees promised security from eavesdroppers.

"Where be you going, Jet? I want to get back to——"

"Listen, and don't make such a row," interposed the other. "Will you have a lark?"

"Who with?"

"Me, of course. I be going to pay out Bill Agg."

"Is he off with you? I just saw him larking with Nan Keyte, and I meant to tell you."

"Let him! But will you come into the belfry to-night?"

"What for?"

"Will you come? It be St. Thomas's in the morning, and they ring at five o'clock."

"What, and stay in the belfry all night?"

"That's it."

The girls stared at each other in the dark, but the expression of their features was not distinguishable.

"Not I!" cried Leah at last, turning round. "You'll perish with cold."

"Then don't; but look here, Leah, if you tell any of them I'll wring your neck."

"All right," rang through the darkness from the departing girl, and Jet was standing alone.

Anger against her timid friend she hardly felt, so consuming was the rage against a faithless lover. She went on down the road into the impenetrable darkness in fiery contemplation. The mirthful cries from the village which followed her added fuel to the blaze, recalling as they did the jeers of the bystanders who had overheard Agg's scornful repudiation of herself, and emphasising the unfamiliar sense of exile which now possessed her.

Her craving for revenge was deep, nor was the manner of it undecided; but, despite a certain vigour of character, Jet was still a woman. A whole night in the church tower alone offered a grisly aspect even to her, and with the exception of Leah, there was nobody to whom she would entrust her intention. She found her way to the roadside and leaned over a gate, resting her flushed forehead on her hands. She had been scarcely a moment there when on a cold gust of wind came the weird halloo of an owl from somewhere close beside her, followed directly by the second longer quavering cry, in which the peculiar effect of this bird's unearthly note is especially found. Owls were familiar to Jet; still, they had lost none of their impressive sway over her mind. She could not pass a night alone with them in the dark.

But she did not for that abandon her scheme. Five o'clock in the morning was the hour at which the men would come to the church for their customary peal, this

early musical celebration of the memory of St. Thomas being the accepted inauguration of Christmas week's festivities by the inhabitants of Elmsey. If Jet were there by four she might still escape detection and accomplish her design.

Still darker and still colder was it when, in these small hours before the winter dawn, the resolute girl stole from her mother's cottage. Her teeth chattered involuntarily as she hurried through the raw air, drawing a great black shawl tightly around her, and deadening her footsteps as much as she could on the way. She had but a couple of hundred yards to go, and then she was at the churchyard gate. As she opened this noiselessly she heard only the wind whispering in the old yew-tree among the graves, and the noise of a cock in a distant farmyard.

"I JUST SAW HIM LARKING WITH NAN KEYTE."

Not even a streak of light or cloud form was in the sky.

The sound of the key turning in the great lock was exaggerated by her fancy, seeming loud enough to disturb the dead, and as she pushed the heavy door open, it groaned solemnly, sending a suggestion of such sepulchral vastness through the dark yawning church as almost to daunt the intrepid girl in her enterprise. But she screwed up her courage, and eventually succeeded in locking herself in. The great key which she had obtained was that of the north door (the ringers had their own entrance at the foot of the tower), and as she drew it out of the lock it slipped from her fingers and fell upon the stone floor. The loud report which rang through the church, instead of dismaying, put fresh courage into Jet, and when she had got the key safely in her pocket she felt her way boldly between the pews.

In ascending the steep and narrow steps of the tower, the girl allowed herself a bit of candle, but blew it out when she came to the chamber above, and had renewed her acquaintance with its bearings. This was an empty room between the bell-chamber overhead and the ringing-chamber on the ground of the church beneath, through the centre of which the ropes accordingly passed. A plain ladder erected perpendicularly gave access to the upper storey. The floor was covered to the depth of a foot with the twigs which the jackdaws carried, and it was Jet's first care, as soon as she had resigned herself to the darkness, to clear these away from a hole through which one of the bell-ropes passed, and which must serve as her point of observation of what should take place below. Ultimately, Jet extended herself at full length on the twigs with her face resting near to the aperture which she commanded.

Some time before five o'clock there were candles alight, and an uproar of tongues had routed the silence of the church. Not only the ringers had assembled, but also a number of the villagers who were interested in the proceedings, for it was not quite an ordinary occasion. In addition to the peal due to the honoured memory of St. Thomas, the time had been chosen (as Jet had learned overnight) for the settlement of a dispute as to some technical skill between two of the ringers, and the friends of each naturally wished to be present to adjudicate upon it. Upon occasions of this sort, the belfry, as the ringing-chamber was called here, became a pot-house, the solid stone table which occupied the centre holding the various vessels of liquor which had been provided out of the funds collected in the parish. Those who were not preparing to be engaged with the ropes were sitting or standing about in positions most agreeable to themselves. The six ringers had their hands upon the ropes awaiting the signal from their leader, who was none other than William Agg; and a few minutes later the clang of the bells broke forth over a stretch of dark and silent country, awakening some who were in their beds, and weaving pleasant threads into the dreams of those who continued sleeping.

Talk was intermittent so long as the ringers were in action, but when the bells had at length "fallen in peal," and the bell-ropes had dropped from the men's hands, conversation became general, while the ringers applied themselves with satisfaction to the cups.

"Well, that be a uncommon good touch, however," remarked several.

"What be your name for that, Bill?" asked one, ignorant of the secrets of change-ringing.

"It ben't no regular peal, mun; it be a form o' Stedman's minors."

"Well, it have a good effeck, that's certain. Ha'n't it, Jethro?"

"Grand to a certainty. It be a funny, curious concern this change-ringing, as 'e call it. Ye seem to have quite a science at it, Gearge. I never studied it myself. My bias were another way."

"The Blue Bell way, eh, Jethro?" interposed a facetious neighbour.

"No, no, Thomas; I beunt no hand at the drink. Nobody can't say that of I. Can 'em, David Keyte?"

"I'll not say as they can," replied Keyte, the religious man of the group, and presumably appealed to on that account. "But ye've a power o' room for amendment, Jethro, in other directions. Not as I find fault with no man but myself; very far from it."

"Hand me the jug over here, Luke," exclaimed one of the ringers. "It be dry work whether or no."

"Of course. It must be despert hard work."

"Not so hard as you'd think," interposed another, "when you once get 'em at hand-stroke. It be the risin' on 'em as give the work."

"Eess, so I've heard said afore. But my father'd used to tell of old Timothy Collett as un could rise three bells i' peal of 'imself, all at the same time like."

"Why, that be nothing, mun. Here be William Agg and George Coldicott a-going to rise four for a crown this very morning."

"By gum, I 'd like to see that, however."

"That beunt no difficult concern. Dick Sandles o' Westcombe can rise five."

"Hast zeen un?" bawled out Agg, turning abruptly with the liquor dropping from his moustache.

"Noa, but I've been telled by they as has."

"Then don't 'e talk o' things as 'e knows nothing on. I ringed Dick for a gallon but last Restoration Day—ye were judge, wasn't 'e, George?—and un couldn't rise no more nor three, however. And then we broke a stay and very near hes neck. Didn't we, George?"

"That we did," laughed George.

"Ay, that be how I heard it," exclaimed another of Agg's supporters, laying down an ale-pot with a clank.

"Well, some tells the tale different. I don't believe as we got fair play."

"Don't 'e begin that, James, for 'e don't know nothing about it."

"I 'll tell 'e what, Jim," shouted Agg aggressively, "I 'll rise 'e four for a quart after I have done with George Coldicott? 'Ult?"

"I ben't no ringer, mun," protested the other.

"Then hold your jaw. Now, George, bist ready?"

At this signal the table was immediately cleared, and George Coldicott jumped upon it. He proceeded to tie the end of a rope round each knee, and then had two others placed in his hands. Thus he began slowly to raise the bells, moving hands and legs in regular succession. All eyes were fixed upon him as he stood upright upon the table.

While these preparations were being made the religious David Keyte displayed considerable uneasiness. His eye glanced nervously around the company, until it rested upon an old man who had just taken a seat upon the parish coffer, and he presently drew in that direction.

"I don't like these doings, Simon," said Keyte in a nervous undertone when he had taken a seat by the old man's side. "No good 'ull come of them."

"What be the start now, David?" asked the elder in surprise.

"I can't think as these doings be according to religious principles."

"Don't 'e bother your head about religious principles, mun; it ben't Sunday. And you a young man an' all."

"That be true, of course; but I can't be off thinking as us be doing wrong. Ye 'll remember that verse of the Gospel about the money-changers and they as sold doves, and how the Lord druv 'em all out, saying: 'It is written my house shall be called the house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves.'"

"Why, what bist a-talking about, David Keyte?" cried out a neighbour who chanced to overhear the remark. "There ben't no thieves here. Yer religion be getting past a-bearing."

Nobody else noticed it, as all were intent upon watching the feat of the bell-ringer.

"Don't 'e think as there be some resemblance in a manner, Simon?"

"I can't say as I do, David. But I was never much of a hand at religion. It be what the old men had used to do when I were a boy, however, and they 'd ought to ha' knawed what were right religion better 'an we. My father in his latter days was quite one for religion, in his plain way, of course, and he 'd used to come and sit on this very coffer when us were a-ringing. He never said as we were a den o' thieves, and yet I can tell 'e, David, as we did all manner at that time o' day."

There were shouts of applause as Coldicott, who had wielded successfully his four bells, drew to a close. One hand after another, and similarly knee after knee was drawn up as the bells described their circle from "hand stroke" to "back stroke"; but with infinite skill the man overcame the resistance and stood erect before them all. This his own friends proclaimed to be hard to beat, and again accorded him vociferous applause. Having dropped the two ropes which occupied his hands, the ringer proceeded to untie those which bound his legs, an operation which was regarded with unquiet solemnity by the sensitive Keyte. Just as the second rope seemed on the point of falling from him, by some unaccountable movement the man was thrown from his balance, and amid uproarious mirth fell in a heap to the floor. The malevolent rope continued to dangle and to dance as though taking a full part in the fun which it had occasioned.

"I knawed it 'ud be," observed Keyte aside to his old companion. "Med ha' broke hes neck. There 'll be a judgment on it, I 'll warrant 'e."

"Ye go whum, David, if ye be in anguish," exclaimed the old man petulantly through his laughter. "I cannot abide your maundering."

But curiosity got the better even of David for a short time longer. He

watched Agg with a dull reflective eye as the overbearing champion attached the ropes to himself according to his own secret cunning, and his gaze continued fixed upon him through the antics which followed, with a growing intensity of disapproval and distrust. Agg handled the ropes with the skill and confidence of an expert to the muttered approbation of his friends, and for a time all went well. After the bells, however, had been in full easy swing for some seconds, without notice and without any apparent cause, a change came over the movements of the man, and there was irregularity among the bells. The onlookers murmured surprise and discontent, especially zealous ones flinging out excited appeal. Suddenly, all the voices ceased, until after a moment's impressive pause they united again in one subdued and awe-struck "Gum!"

After being overturned by what was apparently his loss of control over the bells, Agg had been by a single jerk hauled half-way to the roof, and there hung suspended, legs uppermost. As part of his special method consisted in fastening the ropes to his arms as well as legs, instead of merely holding the two hand ones as Coldicott had done, the man dangled powerless in mid-air.

The first shock of surprise and fright in the onlookers quickly gave place to a volley of laughter as Agg began to cut so ludicrous a figure under the manipulation of the bells. The ropes tugged irregularly this way and that as the bells revolved on their well-oiled wheels, and if these had been heavier would undoubtedly have torn his limbs asunder, so angry were they at the indignity to which they were being subjected.

"Ye've turned a bell, Bill!" shouted one from amidst the mirth below. "Hold on a minute, and I'll go up into the loft."

From Bill came only curses loud and deep as he fought with the ropes.

There was a cry of assent as the volunteer seized a candle in his fingers, and stepped to the little door in the corner, which gave entrance to the stairs into the tower. He flung the door open, and was leaning forward to ascend when his eye fell upon something on the bottom step. With a fearsome ejaculation he dropped the candle, and hurling himself backwards, overturned in his flight those who were pressing on his heels.

"Didn't I say it?" shrieked David Keyte, as, catching the deadly fright of the assembly, he joined in the stampede to the door, by which alone there was escape from the church. In a minute not one remained.

One candle was left burning, by which all had perceived the grim apparition which had frustrated their intentions on behalf of Agg. A tall black figure had issued from the belfry doorway, and, although without apparent eyes, seemed to stand there in contemplation of the field. It remained motionless until the last had gone, and then, advancing to where the candle stood, Jet took the shawl from her head, and with the light full upon her features, gazed upwards at her prisoner and smiled. Defiant and beautiful she looked there.

By dint of much struggling with the ropes Agg had succeeded in raising his body to a horizontal position, and as he clung there he glowered down upon the triumphant girl with features resembling a gargoyle. The practical difficulties of his situation, perhaps, precluded all superstitious suggestion in his case, the savage expressions of rage with which he greeted Jet showing his ready perception of her trick.

"Will you have some beer, Bill?" asked she, raising an empty cup above her head, but there came no response. The man's eyes were now averted from her, and his hands were busy. Hearing the voices, one of the crowd huddled in the darkness outside ventured to put his head through the doorway, and supported by another, presently entered. Recognising the girl who stood there, and the quarrel between her and Agg being familiar matter, the explanation of the ghostly doings passed quickly out to their companions, who celebrated alike their deliverance from superstitious terrors and their appreciation of the bold joke in one long whoop of mirth, which rang through the hollow darkness of the church and broke the stillness of the winter morning for a mile around.

"Her've done you, Bill," came from the tongues of those who were venturing in, and Jet, seeing her purpose accomplished and Agg an object of ridicule to all his friends, disappeared again in the darkness of the tower stairway. Just as she went, Agg had succeeded in untying the rope which bound one of his arms, and with the liberated hand he drew a knife from his pocket, with which he cut through the rest. To the supreme astonishment of those below, in an instant he was sliding to the ground, the bell with which his movements communicated tolling quickly as he did so.

Ready to greet him with mirth, a companion thrust upon him a beaker of ale, which Agg in silence dashed to the ground, as with a scowl he passed to the doorway through which Jet had disappeared a moment before. A silence fell on all, and the sounds of the man's heavy boots clumsily ascending the dark and narrow steps between the walls alone broke the stillness of the church. One

"WILL YOU HAVE SOME BEER, BILL?" ASKED SHE, RAISING AN EMPTY GLASS ABOVE HER HEAD.

man, who was looking upwards, saw one of the cut ropes disappear through its hole above. Jet had gone up to liberate her prisoner, and expecting to find the rope heavy with his weight, had pulled it up unintentionally. She tried another.

"What be the man about?" asked one, looking at his neighbour.

"What a fool we be if we can't take a bit of a joke like that. Why, I mind when——"

All faces were turned upon one another, and then in grim silence turned simultaneously to the roof, whence had come a piercing sound, followed by a noise of scuffling.

"Did Jet go into the loft?" asked one hurriedly, recognised as an old lover of Jet's.

"Ay, that her did, Thomas," said the only one who could find a voice.

The first speaker walked to the foot of the steps and shouted out, "Bill! Jet!"

No answer came, only the echo from the dark and hollow tower. All faces were eagerly strained in the same direction in affrighted silence. Even the creaking of a pew in the church was audible.

"The Lord forgive me!" cried David Keyte flying to the door. "I've stayed too long."

Nobody heeded him, all being too intent upon the excited action of that old lover of Jet's. Without another word, he had seized the one remaining candle, and with it he passed rapidly to the narrow staircase, leaving utter darkness and high suspense behind.

All breaths were held and all ears strained, to catch the sound of the ascending footsteps. They ceased, and a deathly pause ensued. Again there were movements: crackling of sticks as under a heavy tread audible to those at the foot of the stairs. The uncertain light of the candle had been visible at the top; suddenly it went out.

"'St want a light, Tom?" shouted one below.

"Oh, Jet!" came in a harrowing tone from the darkness above, and then a torrent of sobs.

Two others, taking matches, went up to see, and half an hour later the silent gloom before the dawn alone reigned throughout the church, while the wind which ushered in St. Thomas's Day began to sigh around the tower.

WILMINGTON AND THE LONG MAN.

By GEORGE CLINCH.

OF the many thousands of railway passengers who annually travel through Sussex on their journey to or from Hastings, Eastbourne, and other adjacent seaside resorts, there must be many who pass by the fine downs in the vicinity of Polegate in entire ignorance of the fact that they have been near to, and within sight of, one of the most interesting monuments of hoary antiquity to be found throughout the kingdom.

The South Downs, from the Devil's Dyke to Beachy Head, present a panorama of scenery which, compared with the surrounding pastoral and agricultural surface, may be pronounced bold and romantic. About midway between Berwick and Polegate stations, at a point where the side of the hill is very precipitous, those who know exactly the spot where to look will be able to see from the railway-carriage windows a sort of rude imitation of the human form, outlined in white. The figure, which is between two hundred and three hundred feet in height, holds a long staff in each hand. This is "The Long Man of Wilmington," once the centre of profound veneration and worship, but now merely an object of interest to the curious.

The Wilmington Long Man belongs essentially to an age which has passed entirely away. It has outlived even the popular veneration which usually clings to monuments of antiquity. The shepherd or the ploughman, upon being questioned on the point, will account for the origin of this gigantic figure by attributing it to the exertions of the monks of Wilmington Priory when they had nothing better to do.

It is worthy of note that a somewhat similar gigantic figure at Cerne Abbas, in Dorsetshire, is also popularly credited with a similar origin. It is scarcely necessary to add that the explanation is, in both cases, entirely erroneous: the cult of which these gigantic figures are but faint traces had no relation to Christianity, but was closely akin to that religion which taught the worship of natural objects and material forms.

In order to obtain an adequate idea of this great hillside figure, dominating the surrounding country, and appearing to watch as guardian over the little village below, it is desirable to approach it afoot, tramping along the winding lanes as the pilgrims of old must have tramped when they came hither on the occasion of some great religious festival. Seen from afar, the figure does not appear to be of remarkable size, but gradually, as one approaches the hill, it assumes an imposing and definite shape.

The figure, about 240 ft. in height, was merely shaped in the turf, so as to allow the chalk to appear through. In the course of time these depressions in the surface became almost imperceptible, and to such an extent was the figure neglected that at last it was only possible to make out the form at a distance when the slight hollows were marked by drifted snow or when the oblique rays of the rising or setting sun threw them into deep shadow. In order to preserve the form of the Long Man, and to render it at the same time easily distinguishable at a distance, the outline was marked by a single line of white bricks placed closely together. The effect has been to produce a somewhat startling figure, which is plainly visible in fine weather from a great distance.

There are in different parts of the country other examples of extremely rude and early hillside figures; and, although the very fact of their great antiquity renders it unlikely that historical or documentary evidence will be forthcoming as to their design or precise purpose, it is very satisfactory to find that an explanation has been found which will at once account for many of their peculiarities.

The theory is that these are sacrificial figures. We learn from the writings of Cæsar that the Gauls (and the Britons were doubtless included) had figures of vast size, the limbs of which, formed of osiers, they filled with living men. The figure was ultimately fired, and the miserable victims perished in the flames. It has been imagined by some that the objects

described by Cæsar were a sort of wicker-basket of vast size, shaped like a human being; but Strabo informs us that in these figures were wood for fuel, cattle, and several kinds of wild beasts; and this clearly shows that the figures could not have been the basket-work idol indicated in our popular representations, but rather an arena. "Now," says one writer on the subject, "if we can unite these two features—the huge human form and the arena—we shall probably approximate towards the mark, still more so if we can show that the two united came under the special description Cæsar gives of the British deity already mentioned. . . . In the immediate neighbourhood of Cæsar's landing is such an image, 240 ft. high, and on so steep a slope of a hill (about 50 deg.) as to look almost upright; this

WILMINGTON, SUSSEX: THE ENTRANCE TO THE VILLAGE.

THE LONG MAN OF WILMINGTON, FROM THE VILLAGE.

figure, fenced round in the manner customary with the Britons in their defences in the woods, and which is still retained in a more simple form by the hurdle pen in Sussex, would have represented an almost upright human figure, and at the same time an arena."

The deity that Cæsar mentions as the one of whom the Britons had images is thus described: "They consider him their

THE LONG MAN OF WILMINGTON.

guide in travelling on their journeys, and believe him to have very great influence over the acquisition of gain and mercantile transactions." The staves shown in the hands of the Long Man at Wilmington are regarded as symbols of a pilgrim. Moreover the position of the Wilmington figure in the centre of that locality which had the greatest mercantile dealings with the Continent may be regarded as a particularly appropriate one for the representation of the figure of a deity of commerce. The probability is, therefore, that Cæsar had this and other similar hillside sculptures in his mind when he wrote the account to which reference has been made.

There is a local saying in Sussex, probably of great antiquity, in which the Long Man is mentioned in reference to the weather. It runs—

When Firle Hill and Long Man has a cap,
We at A'ston gets a drap.

Firle Hill, or Beacon, is a well-known height of the South Downs, and the "cap" referred to is a covering of clouds or mist.

In addition to this highly curious figure, Wilmington possesses several other attractive features. Near the parish church (itself a fine old building) there still remain considerable portions of a monastic establishment which once existed here. This house at Wilmington was an alien cell belonging to the Abbey of Grestein, near Honfleur, in the diocese of Lisieux. It was probably never a very important or wealthy priory. In the first year of Henry V. its possessions were given to the Dean and Chapter of Chichester, and with them it remained until the time of Elizabeth. The entrance gateway still stands, and there is a vaulted cellar in good preservation under the remains of the priory itself, which have been converted into a farm-house. What was once the chapel, an apartment with an arched roof of timber, has long since been converted into the principal sitting-room of the house.

The village of Wilmington, which is pleasantly situated near the foot of the downs, amidst a profusion of beautiful trees, is approached by a narrow lane commanding views of the church, with its ancient yew-tree, and beyond, on the side of the hill, the remarkable "Long Man," the presiding genius of the locality. It is placed too far from the railway stations to be much frequented by visitors, and so it has managed to preserve an air of primitive quietude which is not often found so near our fashionable seaside watering-places.

A PLAYING OF "THE BOHEMIAN GIRL."

By EDGAR TURNER.

THE old lady seemed thankful and content, and it was fitting that she should so seem, and that she should smile and murmur "Yes" when the chance visitor came and asked if she were happy. The workhouse is one of the best of the London workhouses, and the guardians are the kindest of the London guardians. The old lady had much to be thankful for, and the soft-spoken "Yes" was a natural and expected answer. To her the house was simply a house, a walling out of the wind and the cold. The days of her work were done, and to them had succeeded a time of rest. Without effort and with hands folded in her lap she drifted slowly along a warmed and lighted way to the yet greater rest that was whispered to be beyond. Yes; the way was warmed and lighted, and it seemed that the traveller was thankful and content, and sometimes one saw her eyes uplifted and her lips moving as if in expression of the gratitude; sometimes so, but sometimes one saw the eyes in sorrowful downward gaze, and the lips in trembling movement that was not of words, and, seeing, knew the measure of the happiness. The old lady had a past that to her was history; and always when the traveller has lived, the beginning of the way is the dying from life, the end is the dying from the memory of life. When there has been no living, but only a time of eating and drinking, there is no memory, there is a further time of eating and drinking and a one dying only. Sometimes, then, the lips were faintly trembling and the eyes were gazing sorrowfully downward; the clouding of remembrance and regret was between the woman and the clear happiness.

This is a world of facts, and not of sentiment, says one, with store of houses and lands, and sons and friends, and if the flotsam of the sea of circumstance find quiet water before the final passing beneath, there is call for gratefulness and not for lamentation. Yes, this is a world of facts—the workhouse is a fact, and the quiet water is a fact; the pictures of the past that come in light and in darkness are imaginations which go at quick passing of the hand across the eyes. The old lady was happy enough: the rooms were warm and the food was good; papers and books lay here and there for her and the others to read; at times good men and women came with entertainment of speaking and singing; at times good men and women put money together, and she and the others were taken to the country, and for a few hours breathed the breath of the trees and the fields; at times, nay, once a fortnight (in some workhouses it is but once a month), she was free to pass through the iron gate, and to walk in the streets and the parks, or to visit what friends might still be left to her. The old lady was happy enough: may God help all old ladies whose happiness is as was her happiness!

She had a past that to her was history; and as in garrulity of age she would tell the history to all who cared to listen, so now, without reproach, may I tell it to you. Long, long ago she was a singer and an actress, and her name was one of the hundred names: forty years since and in years yet longer dead she played in opera, and bowed to the shouting of thousands of listening men and women, and was flushed and beautiful at the triumph and the praise. Evil days had followed, how and whether quickly or after stretch of good, I know not; perhaps brighter stars arose and paled her light, perhaps the stars were not more bright but the people were eager for change, for anything that was new. Be the cause what it may, the evil days surely followed, and the woman commenced a bitter struggling for the right to live and to become old. Through space of years there were both friends and enemies, and the fight moved backward and forward; but to the years a time succeeded when the helping hands were none and the strikers were many, and then with weeping and beating of bosom the struggler gave up the struggle and died into the house where now in memory

she lived. But the outline of the history I have given you may deepen and shade from your own study of the little tragedies; to me the picture is complete, the arrangements of colour blend easily the one with the other. Perhaps to you, too, the outline is sufficient, and you will understand what now I write: something I will tell of the thoughts and doings of the old lady on a day of the November last gone by.

The Covent Garden Theatre had been swept and gilded, and a season of opera had been begun and was drawing to a close. The newspapers contained daily advertisement of the arrangements of the week; and although the paper the old lady held in her hand, like all that came to the room, was two days old, the paragraph at the head of one of the columns was sufficient announcement; its prospective notice had become present. "The Bohemian Girl" was promised to be played on the Saturday. The old lady read through the names "Valkyrie," "Tannhäuser," "Cavalleria Rusticana," and they were strange to her and awoke no memory echo; but at "The Bohemian Girl" she leaned back, and in fancy again saw a sea of faces below and around her, and in fancy again sang and acted in the rôle of the lost child grown to a beautiful passionate woman. Forty years ago! There was a tear on her cheek at the thought of the then and the now. The women will remember, and fancy, and then weep at the fancy. Flowers had been thrown to the stage-front and lifted and given to her at each scene and act; and when the playing was ended people had waited about the theatre door, and had gone only when she had passed through them to her carriage. The days of the present were dull and broken by no emotion; the flowers and the people and the carriage were but as a vivid and unforgotten dream. Other tears fell, and with slow-moving hand she brushed the wet away; but now to the sentiment of the past there came gradual mingling with the facts of the present; and now there was almost brightness in the woman's eyes as she stood up and began to reason with the thought.

The day was the day on which for a few hours one was permitted to go into the world beyond the workhouse, and it was the day on which "The Bohemian Girl" was to be played. Might not she who had sung and acted now listen and watch? Might not she who had looked upon the thousands now look with the thousands? Quickly questioned the thought, and quickly the wish made answer; the eyes became more bright, and the "might" gave place to "would." She who had played would watch a playing; she who had been praised would praise.

The old lady passed out through the gate and walked very slowly up the street—a study in grey. The oval-fronted bonnet was grey; the hair beneath was grey; the thin cheeks were grey; the shawl was grey; the short skirt was grey; maybe the heart itself was grey. Slowly up the street, and up the other streets, she went on her way to the home of one who had been worsted but not utterly beaten in the struggle, and who, of the many, was still her friend. Sons and daughters—usual friends of the old—she had none. The facts and the sentiment moved together and became plans. The workhouse regulations bade that at seven she should be within the walls again; but if of a little her friend would give a little, at seven she would be on the theatre-steps awaiting the opening of the doors and the upward climb. There was only the doubt of the gift—of the means to the end; and the doubt was soon to go, for the poor are always good to the poor, and the friend was a friend of years. Late that afternoon two old ladies drank tea together, and talked of the days gone by; later yet, one, with a shilling in her hand, walked towards Covent Garden and the theatre. The plan had been found good and was being raised into action.

It was early, and she was one of the first to come; and on the step before the door she stood, a weak little woman between two tall strong men. The minutes passed, and, with good-humoured pushing and crowding, more people, many more, gathered about the door; a faintness was upon the old lady, and she was breathing quickly, and silently praying that the way might soon be opened. A little longer, and there came help to her: one of the two men looked down and saw the worn face and the grey setting, and in pity whispered to his friend, and there was an outward movement and then more space for her to stand. So now, fairly comfortably, she waited until at the noise of sliding bolts the crowd pressed close; again in pity the two men whispered, and then one took the arm beneath the grey shawl while the other pushed towards the ticket-box. It was a long, quick climb, and, despite the helping hand, the old lady was tired and breathless when they reached the gallery floor and, still

THE POOR ARE ALWAYS GOOD TO THE POOR, AND THE FRIEND WAS A FRIEND OF YEARS.

quickly, moved between the seats. But presently, in the front row and very near the middle, they found room, and she had time of rest and breathing. With something of colour in her face and with hands crossed and trembling, she sat and looked away to the empty orchestra and the painted curtain; then, closing her eyes, she leaned back, and the fancies of the darkness came and went.

The hurrying to and fro among the seats behind was done, and from end to end the gallery was filled; the body of the house and the windows of the boxes were no longer dull and empty, but were bright with the dresses of women; the musicians had filed into the orchestra, and the sounds of the tuning of strings were discordant in the air; the moment of commencement was near. The old lady moved a little and looked again towards the stage; her hands were still trembling in their clasp, and the colour had faded from her cheeks; the pushing and running had been beyond her strength, and the faintness was slow to lift. There was the noise of clapping, and she saw the conductor step to his place and bow, and turn to his book; then high to where she sat came the soft beginning of the overture, and afterwards the fuller melody. Like a voice of old days was the music; and as she heard she knew that again she was present at a playing of "The Bohemian Girl."

The women will remember, and fancy, and then weep at the fancy; there was the wet of tears on the thin face that looked from the gallery as the last bars of the overture sounded and the curtain rolled up and showed the chorusing gipsies. But as yet there seemed no cause for tears; she who was to sing her love for Thaddeus sat silent in the room to the right of the stage and awaited her call; the woman who watched was yet to see the rival Arline, and to listen to the breathing of the passion she herself had breathed; there seemed no cause, save that the woman was a woman, and that there are tears of the eye as well as tears of the heart. One by one the minutes passed, and with them the movements of the play; the child was found and lost, the health of the Emperor was drunk to or was scorned, the villagers were grouped in half circle around their count, and the prayers were chanted; the curtain rose and fell, and the years, which in the mimic life are but as moments, went swiftly by. Now followed the time of the first love duet of Thaddeus and Arline, the time of holding of hands and touching of lips. Again the musicians played, and the music was familiar to all, and all leaned forward to hear. From her place above the old lady looked and saw the coming of the girl who was to sing the song she had sung, and saw the greeting and the long caress.

"I will tell my dream," said Arline, and the people hushed and listened as she began the telling, and the "I dreamt that I dwelt in marble halls" rose in the air, rose full yet softly. Now well might the old lady have wept, now well might the tears have passed quickly from heart to eye—lifting of veil of years, mockery of fact and dream, changing pictures of palace and workhouse; well might the old lady have wept. But in her eyes was no sign of the playing on the strings of her heart: quietly she sat, with face white and set and hands crossed in lap, the nervous tapping of finger upon finger alone speaking of the stir within. Perchance the call was beyond the answering of tears; perchance there is a bewilderment of sorrow which knows no expression; perchance the glistening in the eyes of the other women was nothing, was but as the crying of children. In quietness the woman looked and listened.

"But I also dreamt, which pleased me most, that you loved me still the same," sang Arline, and took the hand of Thaddeus, and gazed into his face. New mockery of pictures passing through the mind, new playing upon heart-strings that were near to breaking; now well might the old lady have wept, now well might the relief have come. But, as before, she sat with dry eyes in white set face, and with fingers gently beating together; and as before the other women heard the words and the music, and were as unreasoning children. There had been a love in the life of the woman, as in the lives of all women; maybe a love that was strong in the days of triumph, weak and dying in the after days; maybe a love that was richer, that had lasted into the time of struggling and made the struggling easier; maybe the one, maybe the other, even so a love that had left the life, a love that was dead and cold. Very tired seemed the thin white face, and very gentle was the movement of the hands.

Again there was the music, and the dream, and the happiness of the dream: "That you loved me, you loved me still the same," passionately sang Arline, and bowed to the clappings that followed quick and fast. The dream was told, and it was now while yet the dreamer bowed and

OUTSIDE THE GALLERY DOOR LAY THE OLD LADY, HER FACE COLD AND GROWING COLDER.

waited for the quiet, and while yet the noise of the thanks went up, that one in the gallery looked and saw a strange thing: the man who had before been pitiful now remembered his pity, and turned to the woman by his side, and, turning, wondered at that he saw. The eyes of the old lady were bright, and her cheeks were faintly flushed, and her hands were held close to her bosom; and in voice not louder than a whisper she was singing the words and the air of the song that had been sung. A strange thing—truly a strange thing; and the man wondered, and placed a hand on the woman's arm to stay her madness. Stayed was the madness; the arm trembled at the touch and then dropped loosely down; and suddenly the brightness left the eyes and they were dully staring, and the colour faded from the cheeks, and they were white with a growing whiteness: the madness was stayed. "The little woman has fainted," said the man to his friend; and as the clappings were answered, and Arline began another telling of her dream, they bent to do what might be done for the rousing of the sleeping life. In quietness the woman sat, and the men bent to her help.

Once more the passionate ending, and once more the quick applause; but now the two men had heard not the song, and they beat not hands together. Whisperingly one spoke, and his words seemed weak and insufficient for the thing they told. "It is no faint: the woman is dead, the woman is dead." So he spoke, and the hand of his friend went near to the still heart, and a new wondering came to his eyes. "My God! yes," he said; and then abruptly and more low, "My God! yes—but—let us go—help me!" To the words the other nodded yes and stood up; then together they raised the load from the seat and carried it towards the door, and it was light and easy to carry. Slowly they moved along, and at their coming the people made way to pass, and whispered to each other how hot it was so high from the house floor, and how little was the wonder that so old a woman had fainted; at their going the people sat as before, and forgot, and ceased to whisper.

Arline lifted the flowers that had been thrown to her, and carried them from the stage, and for a moment held them to her face to cool the hot triumph. Outside the gallery door, awaiting the useless coming of a doctor, lay the old lady, her face cold and growing colder, her hands still and crossed lightly on her breast. Again the music sounded, and the playing of "The Bohemian Girl" went on.

HOW THE OTHER HALF LIVES.

THE LOCK-KEEPER.

By S. L. BENSUSAN.

MANY miles away from London, on a part of the river unknown to tourists and house-boats alike, the artist and I pursued the uneven tenor of our way. The responsibility for being uneven rested upon me, because, in a true spirit of self-denial, I permitted my companion to pull while I steered our boat all over the course to follow up moor-hens, wild ducks, water-rats, and kingfishers. When he showed symptoms of impatience I pointed out the immense physical benefit he derived from open-air exercise, and contrasted my wretched position with his advantages. His muscles were being cultivated, "his brow was wet with honest sweat," as Longfellow has it. On the other hand, I was condemned to a soft and enervating cushioned seat; an umbrella kept the strong but benignant rays of the hot June sun from my manly brow; I smoked the pipe of peace, and was consequently paving the road to early ruin through nicotine poisoning. Yet I never once complained.

It was a glorious morning. The higher air seemed to thrill with the melody of countless larks; from the woods on either bank the cuckoo had called since sunrise; brilliant kingfishers flitted about the stream, or appeared suddenly from the deserted rat-holes wherein they had built their delicate nest of fish-bones and offal; water-rats came out and stared at us as though we were intruders; moorhens, with their startling plumage of olive-green and white, rushed through the water and vanished among the reeds, without waiting to be killed; young fish threw themselves out of their element from sheer delight to think that it was still "close season" for them; rare dragon-flies darted about, reflecting the sun's rays; while here and there some trout rose at the gnats and other winged insects. I should have contemplated Nature throughout the day had not my companion, with unnecessary outlay of energy, pulled steadily on till we turned a corner, and saw, first the weir, with foam-flecked water rushing over, and finally a lock.

The Thames Conservancy has its uses, and we contributed threepence towards its expenses with a good grace. I supplied the good grace in order to take my fair share in the expenditure. Then one of us got out and the other moored the boat to a willow-tree, fetched his sketch-book, and proceeded to draw the cottage, leaving his companion to draw the keeper. I was the companion, and explained matters to the victim, who said he was at my disposal until anybody came along, and was prepared to tell me all about his life and work. At that moment a horse appeared on the tow-path; there was a man behind the horse, a long cord behind the man, and a barge behind the cord. I immediately moved a resolution that the barge be left, but the motion was lost and twenty valuable minutes followed suit. Mr. Lock-keeper came back puffing vigorously, and with reason, for he had ferried the horse across stream.

"Now," I said, "take a little rest. Consider the next thirty minutes as one of your lawful intervals."

"Lawful what?" replied the man of locks in a tone of incredulity. "We have no intervals. We work all day, and all night if necessary, for seven days a week and fifty-one weeks out of the year. I think I'm very lucky indeed if I get a meal without being called away in the middle of it, or if I get an unbroken night's rest. You can come here at mid-day and midnight, at four in the afternoon or four in the morning, and I must let you through without any delay. And you do come at all hours—not you yourself, but others."

"Of course, at this time of year," I suggested, "you may be busy, but in winter you have nothing much to do?"

Mr. Lock-keeper smiled grimly. "Not very much!" he replied. "If it is a hard winter and the floods are about, I may have to get up in the middle of the night to increase the output from the weir and break the ice up, and the job may take some hours. And all through the year there are barges coming through, some by

day and some by night. I don't grumble, you know, for I've worked for the Thames Conservancy since I was a boy. I'm used to it, and never had a day's illness in my life. I only want you to know that we are not here to play, and that there is plenty of work all the year round."

After a brief discourse upon the value and benefit of hard work, to which my friend and fellow-labourer, who had finished one sketch, listened somewhat incredulously, I continued my inquiries.

"What qualifications must you possess for your work, and of what does it consist beyond passing boats through?" I asked. "When are you at leisure, and when do you get a holiday? Which is your busiest day?"

"I believe," said Mr. Lock-keeper, gratefully relieving me of the weight of some tobacco, "that nowadays there is an examination of some sort, but I didn't have to take one, because I worked with my father many years before he died, and then took his place. I hear say that some of them have to be vaccinated before they can get a berth. I didn't want any," and he showed me the trail of the lymph among the triceps of his well-developed arms. "As to work," he continued, "I have to pass all boats through at all hours, to ferry horses and passengers across to the other side of the river, to attend to the water in the weir, and keep the flood-gates regulated, and, as I told you before, to break up the ice in winter, so that it

A LOCK-KEEPER.

can get through. There isn't much leisure. I get my dinner about half-past one or a quarter to two, and that seems the best time to get a quiet half-hour. When I want things from the village I make a dash across in the early morning, but I can't be gone long. We get a week's holiday in the year, but never have any other free time, unless we pay somebody to take our place for a few hours. Pleasure-boats are the chief thing in summer, but the barges represent a big trade with the North of England, and carry coals, rags, and a lot of other things. The busiest day of the week just about now is Sunday, when people are on the river all day, and very often I'm out half-a-dozen times between midnight and six o'clock."

I could not help thinking that this last statement resulted from a vivid imagination, and hinted as much.

"A fact, I assure you," said Mr. Lock-keeper. "Just think for a minute. A lot of young fellows go out for a few days and take a tent with them in the boat. Wherever they find themselves at night, they tie their boat up and camp. They are usually trespassing on some farmer's land, and though he wouldn't mind if his permission had been asked, he gets riled to be taken no notice of. Then the gents break his hedge to get sticks for their fire, and don't mind a bit if they do a little damage. Farmers have been grumbling about this for years, and now a lot of them in these parts keep a man on the watch all night. He reports the campers, and when they are in their first sleep, they"—and Mr. Lock-keeper stopped and made a significant motion to indicate the order of the push bestowed upon the reckless campers—"then," he continued, as a sweet smile played over his features and disappeared in his left ear, "they have to get up and shift. I am roused from my first sleep to let them through on their search for some other nest."

In my best dumb show, for which I am indebted to one of our greatest living exponents of the art of pantomime, I asked whether these nightly intrusions upon his dreams were made less objectionable by means of tips.

"When gents has been disturbed from their camp and forced to continue rowing in almost the coldest hour of the morning," said Mr. Lock-keeper philosophically, "they may swear if you keep them waiting, but they aren't in a state of mind to think of anybody but themselves. Then again, near Henley week, the house-boats and launches that are hired, or are being brought down for their owners, come through at all hours of the night; but they are in charge of servants of the house or men sent by the boat-houses, and they can't afford any tips. I don't expect 'em, but if they come they're welcome. Thank you kindly, Sir."

I paused to assure our artist, who had intervened, that the good deed had been placed to the credit side of his eternal ledger. Refreshed by my assurance, he continued to work hard.

"How does the Conservancy pay?" I asked, recalling the "all hours a day, seven days a week, and fifty-one weeks a year."

"Forty pounds a year, with the cottage and garden rent-free," was the reply, in a tone quite free from the least suspicion of discontent.

I do not know enough about the financial affairs of the Thames Conservancy to comment fairly on this seemingly inadequate wage. Evidently there are men who accept and are satisfied with it.

"Do you ever have any specially exciting times by way of breaking the monotony of ordinary work?"

"Sometimes," he replied, "but I don't like them. Once or twice there has been an accident to the lock-gates. Then the barges and steam-launches can't get through, and the little boats have to be carried over. Of course this very much interferes with the business traffic, and gives me a lot of extra work. The other time when there is trouble is flood-time. Then all the meadows round here as far as you can see are under water, and the trees seem to grow out of a huge lake. We've had the water nine feet high in the fields around, and it is impossible to clear the place with the flood-gates open as wide as possible."

"Have you suffered much through floods?" I asked, seeing his cottage was built on level meadowland.

He took me to the door and showed me a broad-arrow mark high up on the wall. "This," he said, "marks the height the water reached just a few years ago. The ground floor was flooded. I lived upstairs, and, when the floods went down, I found fish in my parlour." In these parts floods are very severe, cattle are drowned, and even houses carried away.

"Excepting flood times, and when the lock goes wrong, you are quiet enough here," I suggested.

"More than quiet," he replied; "downright lonely. Not even the postman comes here: if anybody writes the letters are left at the other side of the river for me to

fetch when I go into the village. Of course, some keepers are better off than I am in this respect, and are close to a town or big village, while some of them are close to the high road. Just a few of us are quite deserted. We get no news of anything. I am very fond of reading. Now and then some passenger leaves me a paper, and I read it right through. Otherwise, I go weeks without knowing what goes on, especially in the winter time."

"You ought to get some sport about here among fish and fowl," I said. But he replied that there was no time for a lock-keeper to fish or to shoot. He had a gun, but had not used it for years; he kept one or two rods for the use of gentlemen who liked to come in the early morning to fish by the weir for pike or trout, according to season. Curiously enough, I had been one of his clients in bygone years, and had caught my breakfast in the neighbouring backwater at five o'clock in the morning; but he did not recognise me. We then discussed the recent drought.

"Very unusual," was Mr. Lock-keeper's comment. "I can't remember anything so severe for a long time. During the very worst of this weather the water has been sinking an inch a day. I think the rain we are going to get in an hour will not last long." I looked up, but saw very little sign of water, except in the river. Clouds had been heavy for some days, but had not dissolved. However, my informant was quite sure that the long-expected shower was within an hour of us.

I then asked him about tolls and rates of payment, and how arrangements were made for big boats. The barge rate, he told me, is one-and-elevenpence per ton to London. Steam and electric launches pay one-and-sixpence for a single lock, but the majority buy yearly passes, and so save a large amount. Very few people try to "bilk" the locks, as the punishment is a very severe one, and the difficulties are great. The barge people pay for their cargo at starting, and get a pass right up to their destination.

PULLING UP THE SLUICES.

We then adjourned to the pretty cottage of the keeper, where he showed us the certificate of the Royal Humane Society granted to him for saving lives, and caught a glimpse of books of tickets and other matters relating to the affairs of the Thames Conservancy. Then we went to the garden, all devoted to vegetables, wherein at odd intervals the owner raised sufficient to supply his modest requirements. With the river all round him, he was probably indifferent to the drought so far as his vegetables were

concerned. Then we walked along the bank to the weir, where the water was foaming, and the fish a few yards off were getting a cheap intoxication from the oxygen. All the business connected with the huge gates and the increase or diminution of the water-escape was carefully explained, and I was so impressed that, taking the only safe and comfortable corner, I held forth on the excitement and delight of fishing in the neighbourhood of any sort of waterfall.

Granting that the life of a lock-keeper is dull, that the work is hard and but poorly paid, it must be confessed that at certain seasons of the year such a riverside residence has charms innumerable. From the weir I had a splendid view of the cottage, covered with a creeper and almost surrounded by the water, of the little village nestling in the hollow far away to the right, of the thick wood on the further bank, and the Blankshire hills in the distance. It was, indeed, a beautiful spot. Coming back we saw a water-rat swimming across stream. "If it weren't for the wretched muzzling order," said the keeper ruefully, "one of my beauties would fetch him," and he went up to a couple of barrels at the end of the garden and displayed two little terriers tied up. "They mope, and don't care for their food now," he went on; "they used to be as jolly as possible, and couldn't hurt anybody. Now I've got to tie them up or muzzle 'em. It's a shame, and no mistake."

I may mention, *en passant*, that the muzzling order has given great trouble in the Thames-side villages. Many people unable to go to the expense of muzzles are compelled to keep their unfortunate animals entirely deprived of exercise. I asked several "oldest inhabitants," and they were unable to recall any cases of rabies, so that the ill-judged muzzling order may fairly be considered to have dealt great damage in poor agricultural districts.

While we walked through the garden Mr. Lock-keeper spoke again of the difficulty of getting any papers or books to read. No doubt many men and women have a large stock of papers and magazines on their hands. These should be sent to hospitals, but a few might well be set aside for deserted lock-keepers. Speaking quite without authority, I venture to think that the Thames Conservancy management would offer facilities for their distribution.

Just as we were about to leave the lock, the promised shower arrived on business, and enabled me to perform one of those quiet acts of heroism for which I claim some credit. Mr. Lock-keeper offered us shelter, but it was near lunch time, and the clouds looked as though they had a lot to say before they finished with the neighbourhood.

"Sir," I said to our artist, "I have a great anxiety on your behalf, and compared with your welfare, deem my own health insignificant! You, therefore, shall row home, and the exercise will keep you free from the rheumatism which I also will try to avoid. He who sits still runs great risk." My friend thanked me sincerely; we went to the boat, pulled up the piece of carpet, and covered ourselves as best we could. Then he took the oars, and I the rudder-lines; I hoisted the one umbrella—which was no use to him—and bidding farewell to the good-natured keeper, we braved the torrents of rain. I relighted my pipe, and making myself as comfortable as elements and circumstances permitted, gave my friend and fellow-worker a gratis lecture on various styles of rowing.

A NEW CONTRIBUTOR.

By MRS. HENRY MANSERGH.

CHAPTER I.

IT was a boisterous autumn afternoon, and the rain pelted against the windows of an editorial den in the city, making it seem thereby even more dreary and desolate than its wont. The editor was pacing the floor; his day's work was over, but he was waiting until the violence of the shower had abated before betaking himself to the bachelor apartment which he dignified by the name of home. He was a man approaching middle age, whose thin, lined face wore an air of exhaustion, yet the habit of activity was so strong upon him that he found it difficult to rest, and after one or two hasty turns up and down, he halted before a table, picked up a manuscript at random from a pile which lay waiting to be returned to their several owners, and flung himself on a chair to glance over the contents.

Every now and then, when opportunity offered, he was fond of dipping thus into the bag of rejected addresses, even as a child may search for hidden treasures among the papers and wrappings at the bottom of a hamper. On one memorable occasion he had taken up a chapter of a condemned novel, and had been so favourably impressed that he had read on to the last page, reversed the decision of his sub., and undertaken the publication of a book which proved a dead failure, and lay upon his shelves in dusty, unread hundreds for months to come. The sub. had triumphed, and he himself had had some sweeping remarks to make as to the discernment of the British public; but he was so thoroughly convinced of the merit of the work that when the same author submitted a second attempt a year later, he faced a severe monetary loss, published this also, and reaped his reward in a success which made his fellow-publishers writhe with envy, and insured a standing income to the firm. The editor was fond of relating this experience. It was his stock tale, and the more intimate among his colleagues were so thoroughly familiar with its intricacies that they could recognise its approach afar off, and take such steps to avert its arrival as were suggested by the circumstances of the moment.

This afternoon, however, it was no three-volume novel which attracted his attention, but just an ordinary magazine story, written in a woman's handwriting, and bearing on its surface certain inevitable signs which marked the amateur. The editor skimmed the first two pages with an impassive face, and at the third showed unmistakable signs of boredom. He flicked the leaves with an impatient finger, turned over two at a time, and was about to toss aside the manuscript in disgust when his eye caught some words which suggested a change of situation, and he set himself to read with renewed attention. And now, for the first time, signs of interest began to exhibit themselves. He was accustomed to read so many stories every day of his life that he had grown case-hardened to the ordinary methods of awakening emotion, and painfully alert to guess the solution of a mystery; but there was something in the quaint, simple wording of this page which went straight to his heart, and presently a strange thing happened, for the silence of the office was broken by a low, involuntary laugh, and even as he laughed, the smart of tears arose in the editor's eyes and the writing grew dim before his sight.

He laid the sheet upon the desk, startled at his own emotion and at the unexpected source from which it had sprung. But what a charming incident! How touchingly portrayed! With what spontaneous grace it stood out from the commonplace surroundings! Humour and pathos stepped hand in hand together, evoking that strange companionship of smile and tear, and the thought underlying all struck a chord in his own breast and set it vibrating with painful intensity. It was no new idea, to surprise by reason of its originality and power; rather it was its very familiarity which made it impressive, for he recognised with amazement the unuttered sentiments of his own heart. He sat motionless

in his chair, and his eyes assumed that rapt, unseeing expression which shows that the soul has taken her flight into those realms where no intruder can follow. The manuscript, with its fictitious joys and sorrows, had faded from his memory; he was musing on that romance which is of supreme interest to every human creature: the romance of his own inner life!

Viewed from a worldly standpoint, Mark Beavan's career had been one unqualified success. He had distinguished himself at college; his first literary efforts had obtained recognition; and he had been appointed to his present prominent position while still a comparatively young man. His work was congenial; he was associated with the cleverest men of his day; but there was a drop of bitter in his cup which poisoned the waters. The father and mother who would have rejoiced in his success had died while he was still a lad, and he was a lonely soul, living alone, bearing his disappointments as best he might, and keeping them to himself—his triumphs also, since there was no one bound to him by the close ties of love and kinship in whom he could confide. His men friends put him down as a determined bachelor; but unsuspected by the world, he carried within him a heart which longed for companionship and wearied for its mate. He had a lofty ideal of womankind; but in the presence of ladies he was shy and restrained, lacking the chit-chat and easy graces of society; and the conditions of his life had been such that he had rarely been brought into intimate relations with young and attractive women. He had not been happy enough to meet his fate in living form; but he had ever been deeply in love with the idea of loving, and in his inmost heart there dwelt the image of an ideal wife—a cloudy figure, soft of motion, with a shadowy face in which no feature was determined save only the eyes—dark, melting eyes, into whose depths he gazed and saw his home.

The figure rose before him now, summoned by the magic of that written page. She moved softly up and down a room which had no place in his bachelor dwelling—a woman's room, filled with dainty nick-nacks; and in his dream he saw a man enter and stand upon the threshold, and the ghost-like figure flit across to meet him and touch his cheek with a woman's loving kiss.

Mark Beavan started and looked round with a stare of bewilderment. For a moment he had been living in the world of romance; now he was back again amid the dull prose of everyday existence. The dust lay thick upon the office table; the fire was dying out upon the cheerless grate. He straightened himself with a sigh and took up the half-finished story. The passage which had touched him so deeply had been a mere interlude in the plot, a meeting between two supers, who had now vacated the stage in favour of more important actors, and with them disappeared all of zest or charm. The story dragged on, forced and artificial, and came to an inglorious end. Mark Beavan tossed it back on the table with a shrug of the shoulders. "What a pity!" he cried aloud, and his lips twitched as he spoke in a dry, whimsical fashion, which brought back the youth to his face. "What a pity when charming women write of things they don't understand!" Then he looked inquiringly at the window, saw to his relief that the rain was clearing off, put on his hat and coat and left the office.

The incident was finished, it held no further interest. According to all laws of right and precedent the story was now destined to fade from his memory as completely as if it had never existed, and to refuse to be recalled even by the naming of the hero, or the suggestion of plot and treatment. But it is ever the unexpected which happens, and this particular manuscript declined to be dismissed in any such cursory manner. It haunted him during the evening, it reappeared in dreams throughout the night, and claimed his earliest waking thoughts, so that over and over again he found himself recalling the different points and repeating the words of the passage which had won his special approval. "It must have been better than I thought," he said to himself. "She is on the wrong tack, but she has it in her! She can do it!" And following a kindly impulse, he hunted out the story from its fellows the next morning, and substituted a written line for the usual printed rejection, to the effect that, while declining the present manuscript, he would be pleased to see further work from the same pen. He smiled in amusement at his own folly even as he wrote. "As if I had not enough work as it is! Now I shall have another batch by return of post. A little encouragement goes such a disastrously long way with these would-be writers!"

For once, however, Mark Beavan's experience played him false, for over a month elapsed before the expected manuscript arrived, and this time it was a much longer and more elaborate affair, and had

evidently been the subject of anxious thought. He read it through from the first word to the last, laid it on the desk before him, and sat staring at it in a comical mingling of delight and exasperation—delight, in that it was so good; exasperation, because it was also so ludicrously, unalterably bad. Miss Janet Forrester, living in an unknown Lancashire village, had elected to choose her dramatis personæ from the élite of London society, and had followed the latest freak of magazine fashion with laborious effort. She had resurrected them all—the old, old, well-worn types: the elderly belle who tried to be young; the beauty of nineteen, epigrammatic, and shy of belief; the tailor's dummies who did service for men—they were all there. But, ye gods! what shadowy imitations, and how shamefully disloyal to the traditions of their kind! They were introduced as monsters of iniquity; the reader was confidently encouraged to expect the worst, and in every instance it was the best which happened, for the writer lost courage at critical moments, presented her creations with higher natures, vanquished temptations, and set them jubilantly upon the narrow path. And the deeds which they did, and the words which they spake, are they not chronicled in the fairy legends of a credulous childhood?

This might be the London society of Miss Forrester's imagination, but it certainly had no existence elsewhere; it was almost as unreal as the machinations of her villain—a worthy fellow who only by the narrowest squeak avoided becoming a canonised saint! She tried so hard to be worldly, this poor young writer of Lancashire environment, and so sweetly did she fail that once again the tears smarted Mark Beavan's eyes and the laugh choked in his throat.

The manuscript must go back of course, there was no doubt about that, he told himself, but he would keep it a few days, and think over what to say, for, callous as he was as a rule to the feelings of would-be contributors, he felt real compassion at the thought of the present disappointment. The two stories which had failed to win his editorial approval had yet succeeded in inspiring him with a very keen interest in the personality of their writer.

Who and what was she? A girl—a woman? Rich or poor? Lonely or beloved? And in what sort of body was enshrined that innocent soul? He pictured her tall, stately, beautiful, and, anon, small and insignificant; but however unknown her outward appearance, he felt a strange familiarity with the real, spiritual Janet, whose ideals were his own, whose words awoke a faithful echo in his soul. As the days passed by his thoughts returned to her again and again with an interest which was widely different from that with which he was wont to regard an unknown writer of promise. He set himself to write to her, but the letter had several beginnings yet reached no end. It was so difficult to express what was in his mind: to be severe, yet not discouraging; laudatory, yet not injudicious. If he could speak to her face to face, he could say it all easily in five minutes' time, and with the thought came a happy inspiration.

It was probable that Miss Forrester came up to London from time to time—he would ask her to call at the office upon the next occasion with a view to a conversation on literary topics. He sent the letter, and received in reply a grateful little missive, in which the writer informed him: first, that he was very kind, and secondly, that she expected to be in London during the next month, when she would have pleasure in availing herself of his invitation.

Mark Beavan folded up the letter and placed it carefully in his pocket-book. He had an instinct which forbade him to destroy the first letter which he had received from Janet Forrester, for deep down in his heart there had arisen the conviction that this unknown personage was fated to exercise a powerful influence—that in her he was to discover the twin soul, the other self, who was to enrich and complete his life.

CHAPTER II.

One afternoon, while Mark Beavan was engaged in one of the lower rooms, a messenger brought word that Miss Forrester was waiting in the office. He had heard from the young lady a few days before, and had written to the unexpectedly fashionable address which she had then given, appointing the present hour for their interview. And now to solve the mystery, and see this interesting new writer in the flesh.

He approached the room with a tingling of expectation, opened the door, and beheld a tall, girlish figure standing by the table, holding in her hands one of the printed proofs which he had left upon the desk. She had an impression of youth and grace, and a certain atmosphere of fashion

for which he was altogether unprepared, and then the young lady faced round, stared at him out of a pair of wide blue eyes, raised her hand to the level of her shoulder, and greeted him with an air of gracious condescension.

"Mr. Beavan! How do you do? So kind of you to let me come to see you! I hope I am not a terrible nuisance!"

"Not at all, not at all! Pray sit down." The editor waved his hand towards a seat, and sank into his own round-backed chair with a sensation of blank astonishment. Ever since the day when Janet Forrester's first manuscript had attracted his attention he had been conscious of an interest in her progress, which arose mainly from his inward picturing of herself, and which was of a peculiarly tender and protecting nature. For some inexplicable reason Janet appeared to him as a suppliant for some gift which it was in his power to grant; *what* precisely he could not tell, whether sympathy, companionship, or encouragement; but it was something in which her present life was deficient, the lack of which gave the plaintive note to her voice, and opened her heart to an understanding of his own lonely lot. But it seemed presumptuous to have entertained such a feeling towards this radiant, self-confident vision! A daughter of the gods indeed — divinely tall, and most divinely fair, with white throat, pink cheeks, and golden tendrils of hair curling over the blue-veined forehead. A more glorious piece of colouring he had never seen, and for one breathless moment Mark Beavan was dazed by the splendour of the apparition; but a longer glance brought with it disappointment, for the eyes were shallow, the chin weak and pointed, and the lips slack and falling habitually apart. The more closely he scrutinised her face the more difficult it became to associate her with the writer of those simple, touching pages, the more widely apart did she appear from the creation of his dreams. He had imagined that she might be embarrassed in his presence, but now it was he himself who was at a loss for words, and the young lady who graciously set him at ease by beginning the conversation. She broke into a soft, gurgling laugh, and laid her gloved hand upon the proof which lay before her.

"Such a curious thing!" she cried. "I was discussing the last number of this story with a friend the other day, and I said it would end one way and he said it would end another, and in the end he betted me a pair of gloves about it. I was so anxious to find out what was right that I could hardly wait until the end of the month, and now, to-day, I walked in here, and the first thing that I saw was this proof upon your desk! I looked at the end, of course—you don't mind, do you?—and I have won! He *does* marry Sophy after all! I'm so pleased. It would be fun to go home and increase the bet, but I suppose it would hardly be fair, would it?"

"Hardly, perhaps!" The editor smiled with indulgent forbearance, but his bewilderment still held him tongue-tied, and Miss Forrester kept her lead with easy self-possession.

"And do you sit here all day—at that table—reading stories?" she inquired. "What a delightful life! If I were a man I should be an editor, too. I suppose you get ever so many manuscripts sent to you! Do you read them all—every single one—no matter what they are like?"

Mark Beavan shook his head.

"No, the sub-editor does that. I get the gleanings only. He sends back any that are utterly unsuited to our purpose. I don't see them at all."

"Gracious!" ejaculated Miss Forrester blankly. She put up her rosy lip in a charming, child-like pout, and stared at him with eyes which looked bigger and rounder than ever. "Then there are *two* of you! The poor authors have to run the blockade of two editors instead of one! How awful!"

"I am afraid that that is the case. It was by quite an accident that I happened to see your first story." He paused for a moment, and then continued in tentative tones, "Brunton is the name of your village, I think? I have never heard of it before. It is quite a small place, I suppose?"

"Oh, terribly small—and so dull! The most hopeless little place! It isn't even pretty. Lancashire is so flat, and the smoke from Widnes and Runcorn spoils the flowers, and won't let anything grow. There are such sweet little villages round London, but it is different in the North."

"But, at least, you have the interest of human life. There are the people around——"

"Oh, but nobody lives at Brunton!" interrupted Miss Forrester naïvely. "Not a soul. There are the doctor and the vicar, don't you know, and their wives; but they are so dull, and so much taken up with their own affairs that they hardly count at all, and besides them there is nobody for miles around—nobody at all!"

"Except the villagers, of course," said the editor dryly. Then, with a shrinking from further disillusionment, he made haste to continue before she had time to interpose a second time: "You must not affect to ignore them, for it was just your insight into the tragedy and romance of those lives, which appear most commonplace to the ordinary observer, which attracted my attention in your writings and made me anxious to see you concerning them."

Miss Forrester gave a little gasp, and stared in his face with eager, frightened eyes. For the first time since the commencement of the interview her self-possession failed at the mention of her writings, and she blushed over cheek and neck, and stammered over a breathless inquiry—

"Do you—do you think them at all—*good*!"

"Now, I am going to be perfectly frank with you," said the editor kindly. The touch of girlish confusion had softened his heart and awakened some of the old interest. "That is always the truest kindness. No. Speaking strictly and from a professional point of view, I cannot honestly say that they are good. I could not accept them for my magazine, for instance; but they interested me, because I recognised in them the promise of better things, and I was anxious to see you, so as to put you in the way of doing yourself justice. We are all ludicrously ignorant ourselves, you know, and in no respect more than in this very literary ability. One man imagines that he is a poet, and bears a standing grudge against the public because they refuse to read his poems and rush after his scientific articles; another man is only driven by sheer starvation to reap a fortune in fiction; while in fiction itself it is quite possible to mistake one's own special vein. Now I am pretty sure that it is just those parts of your stories which you would consider the least striking which have given me the most pleasure. Your dramatic positions are poor and forced, but the little glimpses of rural life impressed me very favourably. It takes a skilful hand to deal with these simple subjects, and your touch is very true, very tender. You seem to me to have a peculiar insight. Now what I want to propose is this: Confine yourself for a time at least to your natural vein; write only about those things of which you have

THE EDITOR WAVED HIS HAND TOWARDS A SEAT, AND SANK INTO HIS OWN ROUND-BACKED CHAIR.

had personal experience. Take the life of your own village, and send one or two sketches up to me, and I will see what I can do with them. We have several publications going out from this office, and I may be able to place them for you. If they are as good as I expect from the samples which I have already seen, they shall go in the magazine itself; but of course I can promise nothing until I have seen them. Well, what do you say? 'Sketches of Village Life.'"

Mark Beavan had a habit of dropping his eyes as he spoke and tapping the desk with the end of the pencil which he held in his hand; but now, as he finished speaking, he looked across at his companion with an interrogatory smile, and in so doing caught her in the act of grimacing to herself with the liveliest symptoms of disapproval. It was not a flattering moment, but a beautiful young girl can come triumphantly through even such an ordeal as this, and there was something fascinating in the audacity with which, realising that discovery was inevitable, she continued to pout and frown, and wrinkle the supercilious little nose, unperturbed by the editorial stare.

"It sounds so—*dull*!" she muttered discontentedly. "I don't think it would be nice at all. 'The Village Blacksmith,' with variations. 'Week in, week out, from morn to night, you can hear his bellows roar.' 'He goes on Sunday to the church.' . . . Oh, dear me!" She sank back in her chair, letting her hands drop at her sides with a comical affectation of despair, then suddenly roused herself for an energetic protest. "I don't believe they would take at all. They would be so awfully monotonous. I 'm sure people wouldn't like them half as well as stories of—of *real* life, don't you know—fashionable life, I mean."

"I don't agree with you; and there is another aspect of the question which you must excuse my mentioning. I think you may be capable of writing the one, but I am certain that you are not fitted for the other. The stories which you sent me dealt with the doings of London society, and they were very unreal creations. There were half-a-dozen mistakes as to such trivial details as time and place, which would have condemned them at once to any reader of experience; and even apart from them the whole working-out showed ignorance of the subject in hand. You live at the other end of the country; you can have no personal part in the society which you attempt to describe, and you are therefore forced to draw entirely upon your own imagination—a dangerous experiment under any circumstances."

Miss Forrester drew in her breath sharply. She had ceased to grimace, but her cheeks burned with a vivid crimson, and her eyes shone clear and bright. In much bewilderment of spirit Beavan recognised that this was not embarrassment, but anger, and that the self-complacence which had carried the young lady triumphantly through his adverse criticism of her work had failed her utterly at the first insinuation against her social position. She held her chin at a defiant angle, and pressed her lips together as if struggling against the temptation to speak some injudicious word. Finally, out it came, in aggrieved, not to say sulky accents.

"I don't see what that has to do with it. Authors don't always keep to their own personal experiences. Their books would be much less exciting if they did. And I always thought that if one had the gift, he could *imagine* surroundings. The Brontës——"

Mark Beavan rose hastily from his seat, stifling a groan of resignation. Oh, those Brontës! For how much editorial labour and suffering were they not responsible! Their very name sounded as a danger-signal in his ears. When a would-be authoress took to quoting the Brontës in justification of her own eccentricities the situation was hopeless indeed. He knew this by experience, and as he was a busy man, with neither time nor interest to spare, he proceeded to dismiss Miss Janet Forrester in orthodox fashion.

"Quite so. There are, of course, exceptions! Well, Miss Forrester, think over what I have said, and if you decide to send me the proposed sketches they will receive careful attention. Good morning. Pleased to have seen you."

"Oh, good morning, Mr. Beavan. Thanks so very much. It is awfully good of you to have taken so much trouble."

She shook hands as at the commencement of the interview, smiled upon him with gracious condescension, and swept to the door, but in the moment of leaving stopped short upon the threshold, tapping her thumb with the forefinger of the right hand with an air of anxious deliberation.

"Now, let me see. What is it that I have to remember? The stories were bad, but they might be good; and the bits that were best were the ones which had nothing to do with the rest—the dull bits about poor people. And you would like

village sketches, showing 'the tragedy and romance of seemingly prosaic lives.' I like that sentence. It sounds so grand. I think that sentence must come in. That 's all, I think; isn't it? Well—we will see."

She nodded her head towards him in friendly fashion, and the doorway framed her for a moment as in a picture—a girlish figure with a smiling face set in a halo of golden hair—then she was gone, and the editor turned back to his desk with a sigh of relief. She was very beautiful, very young, very charming, but his day of subjection to pink and white tyranny was over, and the interview left behind it no glow of excitement or exhilaration, but rather a weary ache of disappointment.

Something had gone out of his life—something that had been very precious during the short time of its habitation—the picture of a little English girl, whose head was wise beyond her years, whose tongue had the gift of quaint and winsome speech, and whose name sounded with sweet familiarity in his ears—Janet!

Alas! the Janet of whom he had dreamt had no existence. She was the creation of his own brain!

CHAPTER III

Two months passed by and brought no further contribution from Miss Janet Forrester. Mark Beavan was beginning to make up his mind that the young lady had decided to ignore his advice and turn her attention in another direction, when one morning he found a bulky roll of papers upon his desk, which proved to contain two of the proposed village sketches.

He read them through, first one and then the other, and the last word left him in a glow of delight and exhilaration. The personal interest had gone, but the artist in him triumphed, for he knew that he had brought to light a writer whose success was a foregone conclusion, and whose name would soon be on every lip.

They were exquisite little sketches, almost guiltless of plot, but full of life: the characters sketched out with rapid, skilful touch, until they breathed and moved in veritable life, and took hold of the heart as old and loved acquaintances. There was in them a wonderful delicacy of perception, a realisation of the sacredness of common things, which is the heritage of the chosen few, and a power of sweet and ready speech, the pathos of which was so natural, so free from touch of morbidity that it brought the ready tears to the eyes; they were tears of joy rather than sorrow, and left behind no shade of depression.

And now he must surely have been too hasty in his judgments. He had called Miss Forrester shallow, frivolous, unsympathetic, but it was impossible that such adjectives could apply to the writer of these exquisite idylls. He had fully expected that she would show signs of nervousness upon her first visit to his office, but it seemed to his masculine ignorance that there was only one way in which such nervousness could manifest itself. She was to be constrained, silent, abashed. Until this moment it had never occurred to him that she might possibly have been affected in an entirely opposite fashion, and that excessive complacency had in reality been a cloak for confusion. And her flighty airs and society affectations? Assumed, perhaps—like the worldly tone of those first two stories—out of a mistaken idea of what was right and likely to catch the editorial fancy. He conjured up her face before him, if by chance he could recognise some hint of the sweetness and sincerity which were surely there; but the vision was illusive—one moment refusing to be recalled at all, the next flashing upon him radiant, coquettish, the eyes dancing with laughter, the lips curling apart as though in mischievous triumph at his confusion. Then, cheated in this desire, he fell to wondering whether that which had so charmed him could be a mere trick of style, a literary sleight-of-hand by which a writer gifted with a shrewd head and an ear quick to catch a given note had been at pains to adopt it; balancing the sentences, as it were, in a critical aloofness of spirit, adding a touch of brightness here, of pathos there, as should best complete its artistic effect. He looked at the doorway, and a picture arose before him of a girl standing with uplifted finger and head poised at thoughtful angle. "The dull bits—about poor people!" he heard her say. The latter explanation seemed likely enough when he recalled that moment; but when he drew the manuscript towards him and re-read the last page he denounced himself for the folly of the thought. Every word rang true as steel; no effort could have achieved such a whole; it was the very absence of effort which composed the charm. In the midst of such puzzling reflections it seemed truest wisdom to put the writer out of mind altogether and rejoice only in the charming nature of her creations.

The two sketches were published in due course, and were so favourably received

that Miss Forrester was engaged to continue the series for some time to come, and so it came to pass that every month a little roll of paper bearing a Northern post-mark was handed in at the office, and took its place among the pile of manuscripts which crowded the editor's desk: cynical stories, sceptical stories, introspective stories—stories which for the most part were not fiction at all, but simply pamphlets on questions of the day, dished up in fictitious manner to delude the public mind, as medicine is hidden in a layer of jam. He read them all—unhappy man!—and cursed his fate, but when it came to the turn of Janet Forrester, he believed once more in God and his fellow-men, and her words were as the breath of sweet violets in a close and fetid atmosphere.

There was no talk of returning Miss Forrester's contributions nowadays. Her name was familiarly quoted in the literary world; men inquired of Mark Beavan concerning his new discovery, and he himself had given her a foremost place in his editorial affections—editorial only. The personal interest which he had once known had died a natural death after that one short interview; but he was keenly alive to her professional value, and took pleasure in suggesting subjects which would call forth the best features of her style.

In the autumn of the following year Mark Beavan perceived from the postmark on certain envelopes that Miss Forrester was again visiting in London; but this time he did not invite her to call upon him. He would not admit as much to himself, but in reality he feared further disillusionment, and preferred to keep out of the baffling radiance of her presence. It seemed, however, that he was fated to change his mind on this point, for before the time of Miss Forrester's visit had expired, he became suddenly inspired with a desire to meet her once more.

The circumstances were these: It was the time of the great coal war, and during the past few weeks the topic of the strike had pushed itself forward until it occupied a prominent place in the public interest, and it occurred to Mark Beavan to ask Miss Forrester to visit the chief centres of distress and write a series of descriptive articles for the evening paper which was published under his auspices. She lived in the heart of the district, was familiar with the manners and habits of the people, and the subject was one which would lend itself peculiarly to her pen. He foresaw that such articles would be of immense public interest, and was eager to lose no time in arranging details, so that, if possible, he might be first in the field.

He looked up Miss Forrester's last letter, giving directions for the forwarding of proof-sheets, and discovered to his dismay that she proposed leaving London upon the following day. What was to be done? It was now four o'clock in the afternoon, and there was no time to appoint a meeting. He tapped impatiently upon the desk, and pondered the question with anxious brow. A personal interview would do more than half-a-dozen letters. There were several hints which he was anxious to give concerning the proposed articles: points which must be brought into prominence; points to be discreetly avoided. It was a subject which required careful handling, and concerning which he must lay down his own regulations.

Mark Beavan's eye dwelt on the printed address at the head of the letter, and the thought occurred that in driving home that evening he would pass within a few yards of the corner of the square. What if he should reverse the usual order of things, and call upon the young lady himself? He smiled at the suggestion, but as the minutes passed by, it grew more insistent. He was loth to give up his plan, and, moreover, not being exempt from the characteristic contrariness of mankind, the discovery that in a few hours it would be out of his power to see Miss Forrester awoke a prompt desire to seize the opportunity.

An hour later his hansom stopped before a house in a Kensington square, and as he crossed the pavement he caught a glimpse of a golden head in an upstairs window, and anticipated the servant's statement that Miss Janet Forrester was at home and disengaged.

He was shown into a room on the ground-floor — a pretty, flower-decked room with the evidences of wealth and taste on every side. A bank of plants screened the window, and on the mantelpiece stood a medley of photographs, large and small, and of every imaginable shape and framing. He ran his eye over them in search of the girlish figure which was growing dim in his memory, found it again and yet again, in every pose of fashionable eccentricity, and greeted it each time with the same feeling of mingled admiration and disappointment. Bright, confident, coquettish, and beautiful withal—but not the Janet of his dreams.

He turned away with a sigh, and at that

moment the door opened and someone entered the room. Not Miss Forrester, but a girl several years her senior, with a small, insignificant figure, and masses of brown hair twisted smoothly round her head. She came forward, bowing in a shy, shrinking manner, and at the first glance her face appeared without beauty of any kind; but she drew nearer, and then he saw that her lips had the sweetness that he remembered in his mother's face, and that her eyes were a clear, golden hazel, innocently solemn as those of a little child.

"You asked for me, I think," she said gently, and Mark Beavan felt a pang of regret at being compelled to answer in the negative.

"I asked for Miss Janet Forrester," he explained. "I am sorry there has been a mistake. If she is at home and could spare me a few moments I should be much obliged. I wish to speak to her on business."

SHE CAME FORWARD, BOWING IN A SHY, SHRINKING MANNER.

The girl smiled with frank amusement.

"But I am Janet Forrester!" she said. "And I am quite at liberty if you want to see me. Won't you sit down?"

She laid her hand on the back of a chair with a gesture of invitation; but Beavan

stood staring at her, wrinkling his brows in perturbation.

"But—excuse me—you are not the Miss Forrester whom I expected to see. Perhaps there is another young lady of the same name, and the one whom I have seen is a relation——"

"Oh, no! My cousins have the same surname, but I am Janet, there is not another. Perhaps the mistake has been in the Christian name. I don't live in London, I am only visiting here for a few weeks. My home is in the North. I think it must surely be one of my cousins whom you wish to see. There are three of them: Amy, Beatrice, Evelyn. Don't you think you have mistaken the name?"

So far she had spoken composedly enough, though with a certain shy reserve which was evidently characteristic; but now the blood rushed suddenly over her cheeks and mounted to her forehead, and she clasped the back of her chair with anxious tension as if an unwelcome remembrance had flashed into her mind. "You are Mr. Bean?" she queried eagerly. "The servant said a Mr. Bean wished to see me. It is not I who have made the mistake?"

"No, not Bean—Beavan! It is not an uncommon name; but it is often mistaken. I am the editor for whom Miss Forrester has been writing during the last year. I wanted to speak to her about some more work. But you are not — you cannot possibly be my correspondent!"

The girl raised her head and looked at him for one fleeting moment. The face which had been so pale a moment before was now suffused with colour, and the intensity of the blush had left the lips tremulous and brought a film of moisture into the brown eyes. She tried to speak, but no sound came, and she was feign to bend her head in mute reply to his question.

"You *are!* You! You are the author of the 'Lancashire Sketches' which I have been publishing all the summer?"

"Yes—oh, yes! I wrote them. I am Janet Forrester."

For a moment they stood staring at each other, the man overcome with surprise and the dawning of a deep satisfaction; the girl all tremulous and shamefaced, her nervous fingers clasping and unclasping the rail of the chair. Then Mark Beavan stepped forward with outstretched hand.

"Then—I don't understand it at all—but I congratulate you, and I am delighted to make your acquaintance! We ought to know each other, for we have had a good deal of correspondence in the past, and I hope we may have still more in the future. Would it be indiscreet to ask who the other young lady——"

"Oh!" interrupted Miss Forrester sharply, drawing her hand from his and pressing it hard against her burning cheek, "I am so ashamed! What must you think of me! It was my cousin—but she did none of the writing; you must not think there was any deceit about that. I was only just going to see you!"

"Suppose you sit down and tell me all about it!" said Mark Beavan gently, and he drew another chair forward as he spoke, and smiled at her with friendly encouragement. "I am sure there is a good explanation, and we shall understand each other better after it is made. Tell me how it happened that your cousin came to see me in your place?"

Even as he spoke the thought flashed through his mind, how different his life might have been for the last twelve months if he had known the real author of those lovely idylls! But now that they had met at last it could not be as strangers. "Tell me all about it!" he repeated urgently, and Janet caught her breath with a painful effort.

"It is a long story, but I should like to tell you I didn't mean to be deceitful; it was arranged in such a hurry. When you sent me that kind letter asking me to come and see you if I were ever in London, I said at once that I would never dare to come. I always dread seeing strangers, and an editor, in his own office!—it was terribly formidable; but my friends laughed at me and urged me on. They said it was the right thing to do—the only thing, if I wished to get on. And I longed to get on. I love writing. I have written stories ever since I was a little girl. When I have finished one I feel lonely until I have begun another. I grow so fond of the characters; I think about them all the time. Once I was travelling in a train, and a lady who was sitting opposite bent forward and tapped me on the knee, and said, 'My poor, dear child, I fear you are in trouble. Now do be wise and take a sandwich; you may need all your strength.' But I was only killing my heroine. She had been ill a long time, and the doctors had just given her up, and the tears were rolling down my face." She paused for a moment, and her eyes lighted up with a gleam of humorous enjoyment. "And

sometimes I have walked along the streets rehearsing an amusing scene, laughing and grimacing to myself, and only found it out when I saw people staring at me with such sad, pitiful faces, as if they were saying to themselves, 'Poor thing! Quite mad!' Oh, I *do* love it! It is my life! But I had never sent any manuscripts to a magazine before those two which you refused. I thought they were not good enough; but just before then my father died, and I went to live with my brother. He is very kind, and his wife also; but they have a large family of their own, and are not rich, and—and it was not my home, and I could not bear to be a burden to them. I was not trained for any work, for my father had been an invalid for years, and I had spent all my time nursing him; but I was so anxious to make money that I thought I would try to sell my stories."

She paused to take breath, and Beavan looked closely at her, saw the lines of care and anxiety on her face, and those tell-tale hollows in cheek and temple which spoke of the struggle which lay in the past more eloquently than words.

"I spoke to my people about it, and they all said the same thing—that I had had no experience, that my life had been so uneventful that there was nothing to tell, and that the little things which I had written were all very well for my own amusement, but that nobody else would care to read them. I was discouraged, but I would not give up the idea without a trial, so I set myself to study the new novels and magazine stories, to find out what was the style of the day, and to try and copy it. It took me a long time to write those stories; it is so difficult to do things which don't come naturally, and, after all, I failed. You know how desperately I failed! Then you sent that letter, which kept me from giving up hope, and my brother wrote to my aunt—the Mrs. Forrester who is the mistress of this house—and she asked me to come up on a visit, on purpose to give me an opportunity of seeing you. I had never been in London before, and it was a wonderful experience, but I did not enjoy it as much as I expected. It *oppressed* me! I felt so unspeakably lonely. Thousands and thousands of people, and not one who knew or cared or took enough interest even to glance towards one in passing; and mile upon mile of those tall, gloomy houses. I always wondered who lived inside, and what kind of lives they led, and if they could possibly be happy. And in every house there was the mystery of life and love, and birth and death; and the people inside the rooms were rejoicing and sorrowing, while the great crowd outside rushed past and took no heed. One day we were going into the City by train to an afternoon performance at a theatre, and I was staring at all the dismal little yards at the backs of the houses, and thinking what a good subject they would make for a paper some day—they were all so different and so characteristic of their owners. The agricultural ones — with seeds sown in old soap-boxes, and broken frames, and straggling geraniums along the walls; and the zoological, with hen-houses and pigeon-boxes, and rabbit-hutches smothered in cabbage-leaves; and the mineralogical, with rockeries and shells laid in patterns upon the gravel; and others which were nothing at all, but simply a litter of pots and pans and broken crockery. And then, just as the train was moving out of the station, we passed one where a woman sat in a chair, rocking a babe in her arms. Her head was thrown back, and the tears were streaming down her cheeks, and her face was convulsed—*convulsed* with agony! She might have been alone in a wilderness. The train, with all its curious faces staring out of the windows, was nothing to her, and we rolled on and left her there, and went away to enjoy ourselves; but I have often thought of her since, and wondered what was wrong—if her husband drank and broke her heart; if she had no money left to keep the home; or if she sat there in the sunlight, and saw death coming in the little baby's face. . . . It all weighed on me, and made me ill and nervous, and I dreaded so coming to see you and hearing what you had to say. My cousins laughed at me, and Evelyn kept envying me, and saying that she wished she could go in my place, for she had always longed to know what an editor was like, and to see the inside of his 'den.' And it came into my head that it might be a good plan to let her go. I had read so many stories, you know, where lady authoresses forced their way into editors' rooms, and they were always very pretty, and young, and audacious, and would not be discouraged, but ended by getting everything their own way, and twisting him round their fingers." (Mark Beavan smiled grimly, and the corners of his eyebrows elevated themselves in sceptical fashion.) "And Evelyn was so charming, with her golden hair and big blue eyes. . . ."

She stopped short; but the editor made no reply in words, and she could not hear

the unspoken answer of his heart: "O wise little woman, who sees so deeply into the secrets of life! O foolish little woman, who dreams that blue eyes and golden hair are the sum and climax of a man's desire!" He looked at her and smiled — a slow, tender smile, which brought back the blood to her cheeks, and sent her hurrying on with her explanation. "When the day came when I had promised to see you, I was in bed with a nervous headache, too ill to raise my head from the pillow, and Evelyn said that it would be a shame to miss the appointment, and that if I liked she would go instead and send in her card—'Miss Forrester'—and bring home a faithful account of all that happened. I was weak and in pain, and it was such a relief to be spared the ordeal that I"—she gave a little gulp over the word, and lifted her brows with apologetic appeal—"I consented! And so—she went!"

"And that is the explanation! If you knew how many puzzled thoughts you have cost me! I was completely bewildered by the contrast between the authoress and the character of her writings. I hope the young lady was gratified with the result of her interview."

"Well," said Miss Forrester demurely, "not altogether. Evelyn is nothing if not fashionable; and she was hurt in her feelings because you told her that she knew nothing whatever about society. She was very cross with me about it when she came home!"

Her eyes shone with a mischievous gleam as she spoke, and at the same moment they both began to laugh aloud, and laughed long and merrily and with a light-hearted enjoyment which was as new as it was delicious.

"I am sorry for that; but next time you will not be afraid to come yourself. Now that you have seen me you realise that I am not a formidable person after all!"

"Oh, yes, if I had only known; but I had no idea what you would be like. I think you will hardly believe that I am shy either, for I have talked so much; but I feel as if I had known you for a long time, and it is such a relief to have told you the truth and to have an opportunity of thanking you for all the help which you have given me."

"There is no need for thanks. No one has enjoyed your stories more than I. Some day, when I know you better, I may be able to tell you all that they have been to me. In the meantime, I have come to ask you to undertake fresh work. . . . Shall I tell you all about it?"

He bent forward with a resumption of his ordinary, business-like air, for it was his lot to make many explanations like the present—to beat ideas into irresponsive brains and combat misunderstanding of his plainest words; but to-day there was no need of any such exertion, for Miss Forrester sat with her hands clasped on her lap, watching his face with bright, understanding eyes, and her mind seemed to leap with his, so that she divined what was coming before the sentence was half complete, and was ready to greet the salient points with a nod of the head or a quick, flashing smile.

What a glorious thing work might become with a helpmeet such as this by his side! What a power for good they might be in the world, two minds of kindred aim, thinking, planning, labouring together! The feeling was so strong that it forced itself into involuntary speech. "I think we could collaborate together, you and I!" he said, and Miss Forrester gave a soft, happy laugh.

"I was thinking that, too!" she replied. Then, with a deep inward breath: "Oh, that is good—to find someone who *understands*! It is a kind world. One meets so many people who are tender-hearted, and anxious to help; but so few, so very, very few who have even the faintest conception of what we really need. I am glad I have met you. I can write more easily now that I know we feel alike!"

"But I knew that before!" he said, looking down at her with his intent, earnest eyes. They were standing beside the window, and the light shone full on her face, showing her just as she was, with no illusionary effect of beauty, no glow of emotion to transfigure her features—just a plain, insignificant little woman, no longer as young as she had been, worn with the struggle of life, with only one redeeming beauty—the hazel eyes, so true and tender, beneath the broad white brows; but his heart leapt at the sight, for he knew that this was the one woman in the world for him, the twin soul for whose coming he had longed and waited.

The conviction was so strong that for a moment he pondered whether he should tell her something of what was in his heart, but a second thought brought wisdom. He would not risk all for a hasty impulse, and he could afford to wait; for he was a man with the power of action in his own hands, and neither the

ngth of one land, nor of the world itself, ould hold him back from that which he shed to find. So they bade each other rewell, speaking well-worn phrases, d parted as ordinary acquaintances, no neither know nor care when ey shall meet again. But when he ached the doorway Mark Beavan rned his head to find the brown eyes following his movements with wistful regret; and even as the hidden beauty of the landscape is revealed by the rising of the sun, so in that glance his own future was unfolded to his gaze, and he knew that his days of loneliness were over, and that the time was close at hand when he need never again say good-bye to Janet Forrester.

KISSES AND TEARS.

By L. GODFREY TURNER.

Why weepest thou, Willow?
All the sweets of the Day
In thy presence abound·
At thy side, far away,
From the sky to the ground,
here is nothing but sunshine—the sunshine of May—
nd the River's sweet whispering sound.

weep for the sins, for the sins of the [world.
Here in the vale
Of a seeming repose
I am told of the secrets
That nobody knows.
I am whispered the tale
Of the world and its worth
And nobody guesses
Its mingled distresses
But God up in heaven,
And I down on earth!

Why weepest thou, Willow?
For the glory of Day—
All its love, all its light—
Should be deemed to outweigh
The regrets of the Night?
ere is nothing but sunshine—the sunshine of day—
Evanescent, though thrillingly bright!
What stories are told thee—
What secrets are these—
That can sadden the Queen
Of the Valley of Trees:
hat can make thee indiff'rent to sunshine's embrace,
And the butterfly kiss of the breeze?

weep for the sins, for the sins of the [world.
Here on the slope,
With mine ears to the tide
(With my locks in the tide),
I am whispered the secrets
That people confide
To no soul upon earth!
And my messenger comes
In the voice of the stream,
Which you fancy but hums
A monotonous theme
Of the lullaby birth!
Did you guess what it tells
As it shimmers along
By the Valley of Trees
To complain of the Throng,
In the city it leaves, you would soon be of mind
That the sound is no sound of the lullaby kind,
For hard truths and hard lies and hard thoughts you will find
In the River's soft lullaby song!

Here in the midst
Of a counterfeit peace,
I am told of the tales—
And the tales never cease!
Of the city right over the fields.

And how can I smile with the sunshine above
When the worst of these secrets are secrets of love
And the terrible sorrows it yields?

And how can I answer the kiss of the breeze
When I know that this water which flows by the trees
Is the same—ah! the same!—
That hides pitiful sin,
That drowns tenderest shame
In the City of Blame
Where the waters begin?

And how, knowing this,
Can my heart find the ease
To respond to the kiss
Of the butterfly breeze?

Here in the vale
Of a seeming repose
I am burdened with secrets
That nobody knows.
I am whispered the story
Of love and its worth,
While nobody guesses
Its awful distresses
But God up in heaven
And I down on earth!

DOWN A CORNISH TIN-MINE.

By LEWIS HIND.

Photographs by J. C. Burrow, Camborne.

I REACHED the mining district of Cornwall by an early train, and wandered for an hour in that desolate land. It is as barren as a London brick-field, heaped high with untidy mounds of stones and ore, and here and there a chimney, stiff against a battered wooden shed standing, like the Eiffel Tower, upon four sprawling legs. These wooden houses are built above the shafts that yawn down into the bowels of the earth, and at intervals, with a great rumbling, an iron box filled with ore is dragged to the surface, transferred to a truck which runs along a tram-line, and then emptied upon the ground. About 95 per cent. is refuse; some 5 per cent. is tin, and then begins the long and costly process of separating the one from the other.

But my concern was with the getting the tin from the earth, so I made my way to the office of Copper Croft, one of the few flourishing Cornish tin-mines, where I had an appointment with "Captain" Trelawney. In mining phraseology overseers or foremen are always called "Captains."

There I waited five minutes in a room where holland jackets hung upon pegs and a large Bible rested upon a shelf let into the wall. Then a man with blue eyes, and a face bronzed and ruddy as a sailor's, stepped briskly into the room. He wore a tweed suit, and a nosegay of wall-flowers bloomed in his button-hole. Asked to name his occupation, I should have run through every open-air pursuit from fox-hunting downwards, and never dreamed that he spent half his life underground.

"Captain Trelawney?" said I, with a bit of a tremor in my voice, for the moment of my descent into the earth was at hand.

"So you want to go underground?" he remarked jovially. "Well, I shall be very happy to take you. I've arranged about your clothes."

As he spoke two elderly men with tangled grey beards, splendid shoulders, and standing at least six feet four, slouched into the room.

They were presented to me as Captains Prettejohn and Tremayne, their rank being agents under Captain Trelawney, and as this was one of the appointed days for inspecting the mine, they would join our party.

"Now, if you are ready," continued Captain Trelawney, "we will make a move for the changing-room."

In temperature the changing-room was like the tropical conservatory at Kew Gardens. Down the centre ran a great hot-air pipe, and upon a settle reserved for me lay a pair of flannel drawers, a flannel vest, a holland coat lined with wool, holland trousers, thick socks, a pair of heavy boots, a linen cap, a felt hat covered with some hard composition, that brought its weight up to four pounds, and a woollen scarf two feet long.

"Must I change everything?" I asked.

"Everything," he replied. "Watch me."

I obeyed, and in five minutes was transformed into a slouching but anæmic miner. A linen cap encased my head, and over that was pulled the four-pound pudding-dish helmet. Its use is to protect the skull from falling rocks, and as a handy place for carrying the candle, which, embedded in a mould of damp clay, is stuck to the front of the crown.

I should explain that as tin and copper mines are free from inflammable gases, lights can be carried to the uttermost working, and the miner may smoke as much and as often as he pleases.

Grasping the candle in my hand, and hanging another from the button of my tunic, I followed the three Captains out into the sunlit street. We soon reached a wooden hut, such as I had examined an hour before. Captain Trelawney pushed open the door. An old hut-man greeted us. In front yawned a dark pit, about the size of an ordinary house cistern, from which an apparently endless wire rope streamed up to where we stood. Presently a great rattling and creaking arose from

below; the rope drew taut, and with a gasp and a rumble, an oblong iron case, rusty with age, dripping with water, and discoloured by multi-coloured earths, jerked itself to the surface and settled down upon a couple of iron supports which sprang out above the opening.

The oblong iron box was about seven feet high by four wide, with a bar running down the centre. It looked for all the world like a coffin set upright.

"After you!" said Captain Trelawney.

I stepped in gingerly, and, to my amazement—for there was hardly room in the thing for more than a man and a boy—the three Captains squeezed themselves in upon me. Their muscular bodies drove me into a corner. I could see little but the backs of their bent heads and the stoop of their broad shoulders.

Then we began to descend: it was horrible. I saw the slimy walls shooting upwards, and then—darkness. And out of the darkness came the rattling of chains and the skidding of iron against granite. Sometimes our progress was fast, sometimes slow, but always down, down, down.

Then somebody lighted my candle, and a voice asked me how I felt.

"Jolly!" I gasped. The word had barely left my lips when the coffin was suddenly tilted back at the head, so that I lay outstretched upon the bottom with the three Captains bobbing upon me like casks in a river. My candle was snuffed out by the impact of these bodies, and when I remonstrated a gruff voice explained that the shaft at this point branched off into an incline, and that all was well. With that another light was handed to me, and the sudden flare of the candle revealed as we flashed past the pale face of a miner stripped to his waist, a light flaming in his cap. He stood at a break in the wall, and had passed out of sight as quickly as the lights in the signal-box of a main-line tunnel.

DRESSED FOR THE DESCENT.

Our journey had lasted some five minutes when the coffin slowed, creaked, and stopped, and the Captains stepped out upon a plank laid across darkness, and I groped after them till we stepped into an underground chamber about the size of an hotel cellar. The floor was heaped high with fragments of ore, just emptied from a tramway, of which the lines stretched away down a dark gallery to the left, water glistening between the rails. In a corner of this chamber the compressed-air engine pumped itself hoarse; flaring candles were flattened against the walls; and perched like gnomes upon banks of ore sat some half-a-dozen miners, eating bread and onions. They were stripped to the waist, and the perspiration ran down their bodies, and shaped itself into oily little islands and isthmuses upon their broad breasts.

Here, where the atmosphere was tolerably agreeable, we rested till my eyes should accustom themselves to the gloom. Then the two agents slouched off to another part of the mine, while I followed Captain Trelawney along the dark, dark gallery. It is the custom to carry one's candle fixed between the fingers, the arm hanging *naturally by the side*, and the palm screening the flame from draughts. When the hands are required for ascending or descending a ladder, you clap the clay-encased candle against your hat, and pray that it may not fall off, for the darkness of the earth half a mile below the surface is a darkness that can be felt.

DRILLING AN UPPER.

Along this gallery I followed Captain Trelawney. Nowhere could I stand upright, everywhere water lurked, and so ere we had advanced a hundred yards my hat had bumped a score of times against the roof, and my blue miner's stockings were dripping water. And still Captain Trelawney tramped along the interminable burrow, narrating, with deep, healthy chuckles, stories of how he had worsted Mr. Conybeare at past political meetings. Of such things he chuckled till we reached the end of the gallery, where the atmosphere was as hot as the second room of a Turkish bath. Here were more miners in such a state of perspiration that I mechanically wiped my own brow and moistened my own lips out of sheer sympathy. I had heard the deep grunt with which they brought their hammers down upon the steel twenty yards off. Their tools are borers (steel bars two feet long sharpened at one end) and heavy

mallets. One man holds the borer pointed towards the rock, while two others swing their hammers over their heads, crashing down in turn upon the end of the steel till it is driven well into the rock. The borer is then withdrawn, and a number of similar holes made, about a hand-stretch apart. Into these cavities dynamite cartridges are slipped, the cap adjusted, the safety fuse attached, the end lighted, and then—well, then the miners scurry away, and in remote passages seek sanctuary.

towards the rock, and, bending, I observed that while the walls and roof of the tunnel were of hard, grey granite, in the section upon which the men were boring certain greeny-grey streaks meandered.

"Tin?" I said.

He nodded. "It runs in lodes generally from east to west, and we follow it."

"And what do you do when the lode comes to an end?" I asked.

"Search for another. Some mines contain as many as sixty miles of passages. As a rule, the tin runs through the granite

A MAN-ENGINE.

"But where is the tin?" I said, for I saw nothing that in any way resembled the familiar domestic saucepan or cullender.

Captain Trelawney waved his hand

in sections; but in rich deposits it's found clinging to the rock like bark upon a tree."

Then we proceeded on our journey through more long dark tunnels, splashing through the water lying six inches

deep between the tram-lines, till we crossed a bridge where the only protection from a yawning abyss was a rope balustrade. Here we paused upon the verge of a huge space as large as a church, and pitch dark, save at a spot about the altitude of the top of a chancel window, where, by the light of three candles stuck to the rock, I could dimly distinguish three miners at work.

Captain Trelawney shouted something across the void. Faintly the answer echoed back, and we were given to understand that they would be ready for blasting in five minutes' time. In the interval an imp, stripped to the waist, his face much dirtier than a coalheaver's, upon which danced the reflections thrown from a candle that flared and flickered in his hat, gave me an object-lesson in the method of exploding dynamite. In shape and colour like a farthing yellow candle, by itself it is harmless, but in conjunction with a detonating cap it becomes a terrible engine of destruction, as one of its victims, who must for ever walk about his native village with a black crape mask over his face, can sadly testify. The cap is clinched about the end of a safety fuse, then the connection is made, and a light applied to the other extremity

A MILL OR PASS.

A FULL LOAD.

of the fuse. The imp was explaining the whims of the explosive, when a sudden cry reverberated through the vault. Forthwith I was seized, and ran at a double, in the company of a dozen miners, along a tunnel, only pausing when we reached a sequestered corner fifty yards from the vault. There we waited in silence for some minutes, and then the explosion dinned in our ears. The horrid smell of the dynamite was wafted to us, and I heard the boom and the clatter of falling rocks. When we returned to the vault I saw through the wreaths of smoke that a great section of the rock as large as a pulpit had been torn from its place, and was blocking the passage in a great heap of stones and boulders.

After that we descended by ladders still further into the bowels of the earth, through a shaft so narrow that my coat brushed the walls, "One step more! Right about face! Walk straight onward upon the left plank!" cried Captain Trelawney's voice from below, till I stood in the lower level, where, in some ultimate gallery, a drill, driven by compressed air, was at work. Here the heat was hardly bearable. The din was deafening. Oppression weighed upon me in this cramped blind alley so far from the pleasant light of day. I plucked Captain Trelawney by the sleeve, and pointed a piteous finger upwards.

He laughed, nodded, and stalked ahead of me again down the tunnel, climbed the treacherous ladder till we reached the bottom of the shaft. There the other Captains awaited us, and my eyes were gladdened by the sight of the empty coffin ready to ascend. One after the other we stepped into it. Just as we were on the point of starting a boy miner who had fallen into a pool of water and thoroughly wetted himself, asked leave to accompany us. Permission being obtained, he crawled in and nestled down at our feet. Then the signal was given, and slowly we began to ascend. The candles were extinguished, and the walls began to grow luminous with blue streaks of reflected light. A little later we soared into daylight, and I stepped on to the floor of the little wooden house. I was covered with yellow loam from head to foot, and as grimy as the best of the miners, but a warm bath and the change into my own apparel soon restored my conceit. As I walked back to the station the second shift of miners, who work between two o'clock in the afternoon and ten at night, were preparing to descend.

THE BLACK WATER.

By ROBERT W. CHAMBERS.

Lorsque la coquette Espérance
  Nous pousse le coude en passant,
Puis à tire-d'aile s'élance,
  Et se retourne en souriant,

Où va l'homme? Où son cœur l'appelle!
  L'hirondelle suit le zéphyr,
Et moins légère est l'hirondelle
  Que l'homme qui suit son désir.

YSONDE swung her racquet. Her laughter was very sweet. A robin on the tip of a balsam-tree cocked his head to listen; a shy snow-bird peered at her through the meadow grass.

"What are you laughing at?" I asked uneasily. I spoke sharply—I had not intended to. The porcupine on the porch lifted his head, his rising quills grating on the piazza; a drab-coloured cow, knee-deep in the sedge, stared at me in stupid disapproval.

"I beg your pardon, Ysonde," I said sulkily, for I felt the rebuke of the cow. Then Ysonde laughed again; the robin chirped in sympathy and the snow-bird crept to the edge of the tennis court.

"Deuce," I said, picking up a ball, "are you ready?"

She stepped back, making me a mocking reverence.

Her eyes were bluer than the flowering flax behind her. I had intended to send her a swift service, and I should have done so had I not noticed her eyes.

"Deuce!" I repeated, pausing to recover the composure necessary for good tennis. She made a gesture with her racquet. The service was a miserable failure. I drove the second ball into the net, and then, placing the butt of my racquet on the turf, sat down on the rim.

"Vantage out," said I, gritting my teeth. "What were you laughing at, Ysonde?"

"Vantage out," she repeated; "I am not laughing."

"You were," I said; "you are now."

She went to the boxwood hedge, picked out one ball and sent it back; then she drove the other over the net and retired to her corner, swinging her racquet. I did *not move.*

"You are spoiling your racquet," she said. I was sitting on it. I knew better.

"And your temper," she said sweetly.

"Vantage out," I repeated, and raised my tennis bat for a smashing service. The ball whistled close to the net, and the white dust flew from her court, but her racquet caught it fair and square, and I heard the ring of the strings as the ball shot along my left alley and dropped exactly on the service line. How I got it I don't know, but the next moment a puff of dust rose in her vantage court, there was a rustle of skirts, a twinkle of small tennis shoes, and the ball rocketed, higher, higher, into the misty sunshine.

"Oh," gasped Ysonde, and bit her lip.

The ball began to come down. I had time to laugh before it struck—to laugh quietly and twirl my short moustache.

"I shall place that ball," said I, "where you will not find it easily," and I did, deliberately.

For a second Ysonde was disappointed. I could see that, but I imagined there was the slightest tremor of relief in her voice when she said—

"Brute force is useless, Bobby; listen to the voice of the Prophetess."

"I hear," I said, "the echo of your voice in the throat of every bird——"

"Which is very pretty but unfair," said Ysonde, looking at the snowbirds beside her. "It is unfair," she repeated.

"Yes," said I, "it is unfair. Are you ready?"

"Let us finish the game this afternoon," she suggested. "Look at these snow-birds, Bobby. If I raise my racquet it will frighten them."

"And you imagine," said I, "that these snowbirds are going to interrupt the game—this game?"

"What a pity to frighten them! See—look how close they come to me! Do you think the little creatures are tamed by hunger?"

"Some creatures are not tamed by anything," I said.

"Are you hungry?" she asked innocently.

I was glad that I suppressed my anger.

"Ysonde," I said, "you know what this game means to me—to us."

"I know nothing about it," she said hastily, retreating to her corner. "Play—it's deuce, you know."

"I know," I replied, and sent a merciless ball shooting across her deuce court. "Vantage in," I observed, trying not to smile.

A swift glance from her wide eyes, a perceptible tremble of the long lashes—that was all; but I knew what I knew, for I have hunted wild creatures.

The porcupine on the piazza rose, sniffed, blinked in the sunlight, and lumbered down the steps, every quill erect.

"Billy! go back this minute!" said Ysonde.

The quills on Billy's back flattened.

"Billy," I repeated, "go and climb a tree."

"If you speak to him, he will bristle again," said Ysonde, walking over to the porcupine. "Billy, my child, climb this pretty balsam-tree for the gentleman. Come—you are interrupting the game, and the gentleman is impatient."

"The gentleman is very impatient, Billy," I said.

I saw Ysonde colour—a soft, faint tint—nothing more; and I saw Billy receive a gentle impulse—oh, very gentle indeed!—from the point of her slender tennis shoe. So the porcupine was hustled up the balsam-tree, where he lay like an old mat, untidy, mortified, nursing his wrath, while two bluebirds twittered among the branches above him.

Ysonde came back and stood in the game court.

"It is vantage, I believe," she said indifferently.

"Out," said I, with significance. Ysonde looked at me.

"Out," I repeated.

"Play," she said desperately.

"No," I replied, sitting down upon the edge of my racquet again—I knew better; "let us clearly understand the consequences first."

She swung her racquet and looked me full in the eyes.

"What consequences?" she said.

"The consequences incident upon my winning this set."

"What consequences?" she insisted defiantly.

"The forfeit," said I.

"When you win the set we will discuss that," she said. "Do you imagine you will win?"

She was a better player than I; she could give me thirty on each game.

"Yes," I said, and I believe the misery in my voice would have moved a tigress to pity.

Now, perhaps it was because there was nothing of the tigress about Ysonde, perhaps because I showed my fear of her, I don't know which, but I saw her scarlet lips press one upon the other and I saw her eyes darken like violet velvet at night.

"Play," she said; "I am ready."

The first ball struck the net, the racquet turned in my nerveless hand, and she smiled.

"Play!" I cried, and the second ball bit the lime-dust at her feet. I saw the flash of her racquet, I saw a streak of grey lightning, and I lifted my racquet, but something struck me in the right eye—the tennis balls were heavy and wet—and I staggered about blindly, faint with pain.

"Oh, Bobby!" cried Ysonde, and stood quite still.

"I'm a duffer," I muttered, trying to open my eye, but the pain sickened me. I placed my hand over it and looked out upon the world with one eye. The drab-coloured cow was watching me—she was chewing the cud; the porcupine had one sardonic eye fixed upon me; the robin balanced on the tip of the balsam mocked me. It was plain that the creatures were all on her side. The wild snow-birds scarcely moved as Ysonde hastened across the court to my side. I heard the bluebirds tittering overhead, but I did not care; I had heard the tones of Ysonde's voice, and I was glad that I had been banged in the eye. It was true that she had only said, "Oh, Bobby!"

"Is it very painful?" she asked, standing close beside me.

"Yes," I replied seriously.

"Let me look," she said, laying one hand on the sleeve of my cricket shirt.

"Billy will rejoice at this," said I, removing my handkerchief so she could see the eye. The pain was becoming intense. With my injured eye I could see how white her hand was.

She stood still a moment; my arm grew warm beneath her hand.

"It will cheer Billy," I suggested. "Did I tell you that he bit me yesterday, and I whacked him? No? Well, he did, and I did.

"How can you!" she murmured. "How can you speak of that ridiculous Billy when you may have—have to be blind."

"Nonsense!" I said with a shiver.

She crossed the turf to the spring, and brought her handkerchief back soaking and cold as ice. I felt her palm on my cheek as she adjusted it. It was smooth, like an apricot.

"Hold it there," I said, bribing my conscience. "It is very pleasant." She thought I meant the wet handkerchief.

"If—if I have ruined your sight——" she began.

Now it was on the tip of my tongue to add, "And yet you are going to ruin my life by beating me at tennis"; but my conscience revolted.

"Do you think it is serious?" she asked in a voice so low that I bent my head involuntarily. She mistook the gesture for one of silent acquiescence. A tear—a large warm one—fell on my wrist; I thought it was a drop of water from the handkerchief at first. Then I opened my uninjured eye and saw her mistake.

"You misunderstood," I said wearily, "I don't believe what the oculist told me; the eye will be all right."

"But he warned you that a sudden blow would——"

"Might——"

"Oh, did he say might?"

"Yes, but it won't. I'm all right; don't take away your hand; are you tired?"

"No, no," she said; "shall I get some fresh water?"

"Not yet; don't go. The game was at deuce, wasn't it?"

Ysonde was silent.

"Was it deuce? Does that point count against me?" I insisted.

"How can you think of the game now?" said Ysonde in a queer voice—like the note of a very young bird.

I sat down on the turf and the handkerchief fell from my eye. Ysonde hastened to the spring and returned carrying the heavy stone jar full of water. It must have strained her delicate wrist—she said it did not—and, kneeling beside me, she placed the cold bit of cambric and lace over my eye.

"Thank you," I said; "will you sit beside me on the turf?" Both of my eyes were aching and closed, but I heard her skirts rustle and felt the momentary pressure of her palm on my cheek.

"Are you seated?" I asked.

"Yes, Bobby."

"Then tell me whether I lost that point."

"How can I tell?" she answered. "I would willingly concede it if it were not——"

"For the forfeit," I added; "then you think I lose the point?"

"Does your eye pain very much?" she asked.

"Yes" said I truthfully. Perhaps it was ungenerous, but I dared not reject such an ally as truth. I opened one eye and looked at Ysonde. She was examining a buttercup.

"All buttercups look as though they had been carelessly varnished," said she, touching one with the tip of her middle finger.

"Did I win the set?" I began again.

"Oh—no—not the set!" she protested.

"Then I lost that point?"

"Oh, why will you dwell upon tennis at such a moment?"

"Because," said I, "it means so much to me."

I suppose there was something in my voice that frightened her.

"Forgive me," I said, bitterly ashamed, for I had broken our compact, not directly, but in substance. "Forgive me, Ysonde," I said, looking at the porcupine with my left eye.

"Ridiculous Billy," for that was his name, stared at me with an insolence born of safety, and his white whiskers twitched in derision.

"You old devil!" I thought, remembering the scar on my ankle.

"Where did he bite you?" asked Ysonde, unconsciously reading my thoughts. It was a trick of hers.

"In the ankle—it was nothing. I would rather have him bite the other ankle than get any more of his quills into me!" I replied. "See how the snow-birds have followed you. They are there among the wild strawberries."

She turned her head.

"Hush!" she whispered, raising one palm. It was pinker than the unripe berries. There was an ache in my heart as well as in my eyes, so I said something silly: "There was an old woman who said hush, I perceive a young bird in this bush——"

"When they said, Is it small? she replied not at all; it is four times as big as the bush!" repeated Ysonde solemnly. We both laughed, but I read a gratitude in her eyes which annoyed me.

"We digress," I said. "Speaking of the game——"

"Oh, but we were not speaking of the game," she said half alarmed, half smiling. "There! I thought you were going to be sensible, Bobby."

"HOLD IT THERE," I SAID, "IT IS VERY PLEASANT." SHE THOUGHT I MEANT THE WET HANDKERCHIEF.

"I am. I only wish to know whether I lost that game."

"You know the rules," she said.

"Yes, I know the rules."

"If it were not for the forfeit I should not insist," she continued, returning to the buttercup. "It seems unfair to take the point. Does the eye pain, Bobby?"

"Not so much," I replied, sticking to the truth to the bitter end. My ally was becoming a nuisance.

"Let me see it," she said, gently removing the handkerchief. The eye must have looked bad, for her face changed.

"Oh, you poor fellow!" she said, and I fairly revelled in the delight of my own misery.

"Then I lost that point," said I, stifling conscience.

She replaced the handkerchief. Her hand had become suddenly steady.

"No," she said, "you did not lose the point. I concede it."

I wondered whether my ears were tricking me.

"Then, if I won the point, I won the set," I said.

"Yes."

"And the forfeit——"

"The forfeit was that I should kiss you," said Ysonde gravely.

"That was not all——"

"No, you are to be allowed to tell me that you love me," continued Ysonde in calm, even tones.

"Then," said I, flushing uncomfortably, "when will you pay the forfeit?"

"Now, if you wish it. Shall I kiss you?"

She leaned on the turf, one hand hidden by the buttercups. She had dropped the handkerchief, and I picked it up and held it to my eye with my left hand. Then, with my right hand I took her right hand, listlessly dropping beside her, and I looked her full in the eyes.

"When we made the wager," I said, "we were boy and girl. That was almost twenty-four hours ago. You need not kiss me, Ysonde."

"A kiss means more at our age," she said.

"We were very silly," said I.

"It should mean love," she said faintly.

"Indeed it should," I said.

Ysonde sat straight up among the field flowers.

"I do not love," she said.

"I know it," I replied gaily, and I let the bandage drop from my eye. "The pain is all gone," I said, closing my left eye to see whether my vision was impaired. I was totally blind in my right eye.

For an instant the shock staggered me; things reeled a little. I don't know how long I sat, mouth open, staring at the sun with one sound, one sightless eye. Ysonde, her chin on her hands, lay with her face turned towards the White Lady, a towering peak in the east.

"Come," I said rising, "your aunt will be impatient; dinner has been served this half-hour."

She sprang to her feet. She had been in a reverie, and gave me a long look which I could not define.

"And your eye doesn't pain?" she asked after a moment.

"No," I said, for the pain had disappeared with the sight; "I am all right except a headache."

"And you can see perfectly well?"

"Perfectly."

It was at this point that Truth and I parted; for what was a lost eye that it should cause a moment's regret?

CHAPTER II.

It was about this time that the oculist came to Holderness and visited me at the Rosebud Inn. I was in a dark room; Ysonde thought it better, believing darkness a cure for headache.

When the oculist walked in—his name was Keen—he said: "What the devil are you doing here?"

"I am blind in one eye. Will it be noticeable?" I asked.

"Banged in the eye?" he inquired, opening the shutters.

"Banged in the eye," I repeated, as he bent over me.

His examination scarcely lasted ten seconds. After a moment he rose and closed the shutters, and I stood up in the darkness.

"Will it disfigure me?" I asked again.

"No—an oculist could tell the difference, perhaps. You may go out in three weeks."

"Blind?"

"Nonsense!" growled Keen. "You have another eye yet."

"But I am an artist," I said, in a low voice. "Is there hope?"

I heard Keen sit down in the room, and his rocking-chair squeaked through five minutes of the bitterest darkness I ever knew. I could stand it no longer, so I rose and felt my way toward the rocking-chair. I wanted to touch him—I was terrified. Well, it only lasted a few minutes—most men pass through crises. I was glad he did not attempt to pity me.

"It was Miss——" he began.

"Hush!" I whispered; "who told you, Keen?"

"She did," he replied; "of course she need never know you are——"

"Blind," I said. "No, she need not know it."

I heard him feeling for the door.

"Turn your back," he said.

I did so.

"Three weeks?" I inquired over my shoulder.

"Yes—don't smoke."

"What the devil shall I do?" I said savagely.

"Think on your sins, old chap"—we had studied together in the Latin Quarter—"think of Pepita——"

"I won't," I cried. Keen hummed in a mischievous voice—

"Quand le sommeil sur ta famille
Autour de toi s'est répandu,
Oh, Pepita, charmante fille,
Mon amour, à quoi penses-tu?"

"Keen," I said, "I'll break your head if I am one-eyed."

"I'm a married man," he replied, "and I refuse your offer. That's better, I like to hear the old ring in your voice, Bobby; keep a stiff upper lip. Surgery and painting are not the only things we learned in the Quarter."

I heard the door close behind him, then turned and groped my way towards the bed.

* * * *

How I ever lived through those three weeks! Well, I did, and every fresh pipe of bird's-eye tasted sweeter for my disobedience.

"Write him," I dictated through the closed door to Ysonde, "write him that I am smoking six pipes a day, as he directed." After all, if I was going to be blind in one eye, I did not care whether tobacco hastened the blow, and I was glad to poke a little fun at Keen.

Ysonde could not imagine why the doctor had recommended smoking—she had heard that it weakened the sight; but she wrote as I directed, merely expressing her distrust in Keen, which amused me, for he is now one of the most famous oculists in the world.

"Yes," said I, through the keyhole, "Keen is young, and has much to learn; but I dare not disobey orders. How is your aunt?"

"My aunt is well, thank you, Bobby; did you like the sherbet she made?"

"Yes; that's six times you have asked me." I was wearying of lying. The sherbet reposed among the soapsuds of my toilet jar.

Ysonde's aunt, a tall, aristocratic beauty, whose perfectly arched eyebrows betrayed the complacent vacancy of her mind, had actually prepared, with her own fair hands, a sherbet for me. I cannot bear sweets of any kind.

"Aunt Lynda will make another to-morrow," cried Ysonde through the keyhole.

"Thank her for me," said I faintly; "Ysonde, I am coming out to-night."

"It is not yet three weeks!" cried Ysonde.

"It will be three weeks to-morrow at one p.m. My eyes won't suffer at night. I should like to smell the woods a little. Will you walk with me this evening?"

"If Aunt Lynda will allow me," said Ysonde. After a moment she added, "I will ask her now," and I heard her rise from the chair outside my door.

When she came back, I was lying face downward on my bed, miserable, dreading the hour when I should first face my own reflection in a mirror. I heard her step on the stairs, and I jumped up and groped my way toward the door.

"Bobby," she called softly.

"Ysonde," I answered, with my mouth close to the keyhole. She started: I heard her, for she did not know I was so near. I bent my head to listen.

"Aunt Lynda says you are foolish to go out before to-morrow——"

"The evening won't hurt me."

"But suppose—only suppose your disobedience should cost you the sight of your eye?"

"It won't," said I.

"Think how I should feel?"

"It won't," I repeated. The perspiration suddenly dampened my forehead, and I wiped it away.

"Can't you wait?" she pleaded.

"No. Have you your aunt's permission to walk with me this evening?"

"Yes," she said; "shall I read to you a little while?"

For an hour I listened to her voice, and if it was Lovelace or Herrick or Izaac Walton, I do not know, upon my soul; but I do know that my dark room was filled with the delicious murmur; and I heard the trees moving in the evening wind, and the twitter from sleepy birds from the hedge. It might have been the perfume from the roses under my window—perhaps it was the fragrance of her hair, she bent so close to my door outside—but

a sweet smell tinctured the darkness about me, stealing into my senses, and I rose and opened my blinds a little way.

It was night. I heard the rocky river rushing through the alders and the pines swaying in the moonlight. The ray from the moon which silvered the windows caused my eyes no pain.

I listened. Through the low music of her voice crept the song of a hermit thrush. A breeze stirred the roses under my window; the music of voice and thrush was stilled. Then, in the silence, some wild creature cried out from the mountain-side.

"Cry—cry out!" said I, for my soul was heavy with the dread of the coming morning.

"What are you murmuring in there by yourself," whispered Ysonde through the door.

"Nothing—was it a panther on Noon Peak?"

"I heard nothing," she said.

"Nor I," said I, opening the door.

The light from the lamp dazzled but did not hurt me. She laid down the book and came swiftly toward me.

"Now," said I, "we will walk under the stars—with your aunt's permission."

I heard her sigh as she took my arm: "Bobby, I am so glad your eye is well. What could you have done if you had lost the sight of an eye?"

CHAPTER III.

The morning was magnificent. A gentleman with symmetrical whiskers, named Blylock, and I were standing on the verandah of the Rosebud Inn. Blylock's mind was neutral. His lineage was long, his voice modulated, his every action acutely impersonal. The subdued polish of Harvard was reflected from his shoes to his collar. When he smoked he smoked judiciously, joylessly.

"And you lost the fish?" said I.

"Yes," said Blylock, with colourless enthusiasm.

"In the West Branch?"

"Near the forks," said Blylock; "do you know the pool?"

I regretted that I did not. He had once asked me whether I knew the Stryngbenes of Beacon Street, and I had replied with the same regret. Now he learned that I was culpably ignorant of the pool at the West Branch forks.

Blylock looked at the mountains. The White Lady was capped with mist, but except for that there was not a cloud in the sky. The Gilded Dome towered, clear-cut as a cameo, against the pure azure of the northern horizon; Lynx Peak, jagged and cold, shot up above the pines of Crested Hawk, whose sweeping base was washed by the icy river.

"Do you think he might weigh five pounds?" I asked.

"Possibly," replied Blylock. "I regret exceedingly that I lost him."

"But, thank God, Plymouth Rock still stands!" was what I felt he expected me to say. I did not; I merely asked him if he had ever experienced emotion. "Why, of course," he answered seriously; but when I begged him to tell me when, he suspected a joke, and smiled. If I had a son who smiled like that I would send him to Tony Pastor's. Oh, that smile!—gentle, vacant, blank as the verses of a Brook Farm bard, bleaker than Bunker Hill.

"For sweet charity's sake," said I, "tell me why you do it, Blylock."

"Do what?" he asked.

"Oh," said I wearily, "nothing—lose a five-pound trout, for instance."

"I had on a brown hackle," said Blylock; "it was defective."

"It bust," said I brutally; "did you curse?"

"Yes," replied Blylock. Ysonde came out and we took off our shooting-caps.

"Put them on again directly," said Ysonde, nestling deep into the collar of her jacket; "is it too cold for the trout to rise, Mr. Blylock?"

Blylock looked at the sky and then at his finger-tips. There was a seal ring on one of his fingers which I was tired of seeing.

I listened to his even voice; I noticed his graceful carriage; I even noticed the momentary flush on his cold cheeks. Oh, how tired I was of looking at him! It wearied me as it wearies me to read advertisements in the cars of the elevated railroads. But I liked him.

"Blylock," said I, "get a gait on you, and we'll whip the stream to the Intervale before dinner."

"The water will be cold," said Ysonde; "you ought to have waders."

Now, Ysonde knew that I had no waders. I loathed them. Blylock always wore waders.

"Thank you!" said Blylock; "I will not neglect to wear them."

I looked at Ysonde and met her eyes.

"Oh!" said I, spoiling everything with intentional obstinacy; "Mr. Blylock never forgets his waders." For a moment the

colour touched her cheek, but she treated me much better than I deserved.

"Bobby," said Ysonde, "remember that you have been ill, and if you wade the river in knickerbockers you will be obliged to eat sherbet again."

So she knew the mystery of the soapsuds.

"I have no waders, Ysonde," I said humbly; "do you think I had better not go?"

"You know best," she said indifferently, and I got my deserts, to the placid satisfaction of Blylock.

Ysonde walked away to rejoin her aunt, and I loafed about sniffing the breeze, sulkily, undecided, until Blylock appeared with rod and creel.

"Going?" inquired Blylock.

"No; I shall paint," I said, after a moment's silence.

He joined Ysonde and her aunt, and I saw them all walking toward the trail that crosses the river by the White Cascade. Blylock had undertaken to teach Ysonde to cast. I was surprised when she accepted, for I myself had taught her to cast. However, I never asked any explanation, and she never offered any—to my secret annoyance.

It was just two weeks that I had been out of the dark room. I was totally blind in my right eye, but nobody except Keen and myself knew it. I was becoming used to it. I was only too thankful that the eye, to all appearances, was as perfect as the other eye. But I dreaded to begin painting again. I feared that everything might be colourless and lopsided, that I should be a ruined man as far as my profession was concerned, and I had put off the beginning of work from sheer cowardice. Nobody but an artist can appreciate my mental suffering; nobody but an artist knows that two eyes are little enough to see with. Had the accident destroyed the balance of my sight? Would my drawing be exaggerated—unstable, badly constructed, out of proportion? Would my colour be weak or brutally crude? I decided to find out without further delay; so when Ysonde and her aunt and Blylock had disappeared, I went to my room, gathered up my well-worn sketching kit, screwed two canvases into the holder, and marched manfully out of the door into the sunlit forest.

Ridiculous Billy followed me. This capricious porcupine had taken a violent fancy to me from the moment I emerged from the dark room. Of course I preferred his friendship to his enmity—I still bore a red scar on my ankle; but what soothed me most was his undisguised hatred of Blylock. Billy bit him whenever he could, and the blood of Bunker Hill appealed to Heaven from the piazza of the Rosebud Inn.

Blylock took it very decently—the porcupine was Ysonde's property; but, although he himself suffered in silence and Ysonde darned his golf-stockings as partial reparation, I always fancied that his blood was importuning Heaven, and, remembering George III., I trembled for Ridiculous Billy.

Sometimes I was sorry for Blylock, and sometimes I was not, especially when Ysonde darned his golf-stockings. Blylock was Lynda Sutherland's cousin, but I demonstrated to Ysonde that this did not concern her. Sometimes I wished that Blylock would go back to Beacon Street, and yet I had grown fond of him in a way.

The porcupine followed me into the forest, poking his ratlike muzzle into every soft, rotten stump, twitching his white whiskers. A red squirrel followed him from tree to tree, chattering and squealing with rage, but Billy lumbered along, stolid, blasé, entirely wrapped up in his own business. What that business was I dared not inquire, for Billy's malicious eyes boded evil for interlopers, and I respected his privacy.

Walking along the fragrant brown trail, barred with sunlight, I recalled that cold grey morning in camp when Sutherland—Lynda's late lamented—waking from the troubled dreams incident on an overdose of hot whisky and water, called on me to take "that thing away!" "That thing" was Billy. From his nest among the pine-clad ridges he had smelled our pork, and, being a free-born American, he had descended to appropriate it. In the grey of the morning, through the curling camp-fire smoke, I saw Billy in the act of removing the pork from the crotches of a spruce tree.

"What is it? Take it away, for God's sake!" bellowed Sutherland, associating Billy with other grotesque phantoms incident on overdoses.

"It's a porcupine," said I.

"Pink?" faltered Sutherland.

"Go to sleep, you brute!" I muttered, not addressing the porcupine. I took a poncho, a thick one, and ran the porcupine down. Then I enveloped him in the blanket and got a rope about his neck, tied him to a tree and examined my wounds. One of our guides helped me pull the spines from my person, and that

night the other guide led Ridiculous Billy into the settlement, which consists of the Rosebud Inn and three barns. The taking of Billy preceded Sutherland's death by twenty-four hours; he was mauled by a panther whose cubs he was investigating. His wife, Lynda, who had secured a few months' reprieve from his presence, and who first heard of his death at Fortress Monroe, came north with Ysonde. Sutherland was buried in New York, and two weeks later Lynda and Ysonde came to the Rosebud Inn. All this happened three years ago, and during those three years Billy, gorgeous with a silver collar, had never forgiven me for removing him from his native wilds. His attitude toward the household was unmistakable. Lynda he avoided; Ysonde he followed with every mark of approbation; Blylock he loathed; and now he had taken this sudden shine to me.

Billy and I followed the trail, solemnly, deliberately. The trail was a blind one, now plain, brown and gold, with trampled wet leaves, now invisible, a labyrinth of twisted moose-bush and hemlock, badly blazed. But we knew our business, Billy and I, for presently we crossed a swift brook, darkling among mossy hollows, and, turning to the right, entered a moist glade all splashed with dewy sunlight.

"Here," said I, unstrapping my camp-stool, "is a woodland Mecca," and I drove my white umbrella deep into the bank where the brook widened in sunny shallows.

Billy eyed me a moment, rolled a pine cone over with his nose, and mounted a tree. I liked to watch him mount trees. He did not climb; he neither scrambled nor scratched, he simply flowed up the trunk.

"Pleasant dreams," said I, as he curled up in the first moss-covered crotch and I began to set my palette.

In the fragrant, sun-soaked glade the long grass, already crisp as hay, was vibrating with the hum of insects. Shy forest butterflies waved their soft wings over the linnia, long-legged gnats, with spotted wings, danced across the fern patches, and I saw a great, sleepy moth hanging from a chestnut twig among the green branches overhead. His powdery wings, soft as felt, glistened like gilded dust.

"An imperial moth," said I to myself, for I was glad to recognise a friend. Then a wood-thrush ruffled his feathers under the spreading ferns, and I saw a baby rabbit *sit up and wriggle* its nose at me.

"Lucky for you I 'm not a fox," said I, picking up a pointed sable brush, and I drew the outlines of the chestnut tree, omitting the porcupine in the branches.

When I had indicated a bit of the forest beyond the glade, using a pointed brush dipped in garance rose-foncée, I touched in a mousey shadow or two, scrubbed deep, warm tones among my trees, using my rag when I pleased, and then, digging up a brushful of sunny green and yellows, slapped it boldly on the foreground. Over this I drew a wavering sky reflection, indicated a sparkle among the dewy greens, scrubbed more sunlight into the shallow depths of the brooks, and leaned back with a nervous sigh. What had God taken from me when He took the light from my eye? I pondered in silence, while around me the brown-winged forest flies buzzed and hummed and droned an endless symphony. To me, with my single trembling eye, my painted foreground seemed aglow with sunlight, and the depths of the quiet forest, wrapped in hazy mystery, appeared true and just, slumbering there upon my canvas.

The brook prattled to me of dreams and splendid hopes, the pines whispered of fame, the ferns rustled and nodded consolation. I raised my eyes. High in the circle of quivering blue above a grey hawk hung, turning, turning, turning in silence.

A light step sounded among the fallen leaves. Slowly I turned my head, my sight dazzled by the sky, but before my eye had found its focus I heard her low laughter and felt her touch on my arm.

"You were asleep," she said. "You must not deny it—do you hear me?"

"I was not asleep," I answered, rising from my camp-stool.

"Then you are blind. Why, I have been standing there for two minutes."

"Two minutes? Then I believe I must be blind," said I, turning so that I could see her better. She stood on my right.

"I expected to be challenged," said she. "I did not hear your *qui vive*."

Then she sat down on my camp-stool and gazed at my canvas with amazement.

I watched her in silence, proud of my work, happy that she should recognise it, for she knew good work every time. After a while I began to chafe at her silence, and I bent my head to see her face. I shall never forget the pained surprise in her eyes nor the quiver of her voice as she said—

"Bobby, this is childish! What on earth do you mean by such work?"

The blow had fallen. At first I was stunned. Then terror seized me; I grasped a low, swinging branch to steady myself, for I felt as though I were falling.

"Bobby," she cried, "you are white! Are you ill?"

"No," said I. "That sketch was only a joke—to tease you."

"It is a very stupid joke," she said coldly. "I cannot understand how an artist could bring himself to do such a thing."

"It was a poor joke," said I, red as fire. "Pardon me, Ysonde; I don't know what possessed me to paint like that."

She picked up my paint rag and swept it across the face of my canvas. Then, turning to me—

"Now you are forgiven. Come and talk to me, Bobby."

The sun climbed to the zenith, and still we sat there—she with her round, white chin on her wrist, I at her feet.

Billy, who had descended from his perch in the chestnut-tree as soon as he heard Ysonde's voice, rambled about us, snuffling and snooping into every tuft of fern, one evil eye fixed on us, one on the red squirrel who chattered and twitched his brush, and rushed up and down a big dead tree in a delirium of temper.

"No," replied Ysonde to my question; "Mr. Blylock did not fish. He talked to Lynda most of the time. I came here because I had an intuition that you were going to paint."

"But," said I, "how did you know I was coming here? I never before painted in this glade."

"I don't know how I knew it," said Ysonde slowly.

"Witchcraft?" I asked.

"Possibly," she said, with an almost imperceptible frown.

"I have noticed already," I said, "that you have a mysterious faculty for reading my thoughts and divining my intentions. Are you aware of it?"

"No," she said shortly.

"But you have," I persisted.

"You flatter yourself, Bobby; I am not thinking of you every minute."

"Suppose," said I, after a moment's silence, "that you loved me——"

"I shall not suppose so," she answered haughtily.

"Let us suppose, then," said I, "that I love you——"

"Really, Bobby, you are more than tiresome."

I thought for awhile in silence. The wood-thrush, who had come quite close to Ysonde—all wild creatures loved her—began to sing. The baby rabbit sat up to listen and wriggle its nose, and the speckled gnats danced giddily.

"Suppose," said I, with something in my voice that silenced her, "suppose that you loved me, and that I had lost my eye. Would you still love me?"

"Yes," said Ysonde, with an effort.

"And suppose," I continued, "I had been born with an eye blind; could you have loved such a man?"

"I do not think I could," she answered truthfully.

"Probably not," I repeated, biting the stem of a wild strawberry. After a moment I looked up into the sky. The hawk was not there; but I was not looking for the hawk.

"Come," said I, rising, "dinner must be ready, and your aunt should not be kept waiting."

I gathered up my sketching kit, tenderly, perhaps, for I should never use it again, and whistled Billy to heel, which he did when he chose.

Perhaps it was something in my face—I don't know—but Ysonde suddenly came up to me and took both my hands.

"Are you going to be sensible, Bobby?" she asked. Her face was very serious.

"Yes, Ysonde," I said.

But she did not seem satisfied—there came a faint glow on her face—it may have been a stray sunbeam — and she dropped my hands and whistled to Billy.

"Come!" she cried, with a tinge of anger in her voice that I had never heard before. "Heel, Billy!"

But as Billy lingered, sniffing and rooting among the ferns, she picked up a twig and struck Billy on the nose. The blow was gentle—it would not have hurt a mosquito—but I was astounded, for it was the first time I had ever seen her lift her hand in anger to any living creature. Perplexed and wondering I followed her through the forest, my locked colour-box creaking on my shoulder.

CHAPTER IV.

"To him that hath shall be given, and from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath," said I, knocking my pipe against the verandah railing.

"Scripture," said Blylock approvingly.

"For this is the law and the prophets," I continued, grateful that the Bible had received Boston's approval.

"Scripture," repeated Blylock, with the smile of a publisher mentioning the work of a very young author.

"Exactly," I replied; "also the Koran—I forget whether Tupper mentions it."

"Probably," said Blylock seriously.

"Probably," I repeated, inserting a straw into the stem of my pipe. Ysonde frowned at me.

"Blylock," I continued, smiling at nothing, "have you read Emerson?"

"Heavens!" murmured Blylock under his breath.

I had aroused him. I made it a point to stir him up once every day, satisfied to allow him to relapse into his normal Beacon Street trance afterward.

"Your scriptural quotation," said Ysonde, with a dangerous light in her eyes, "would indicate that you have suffered a loss."

"From him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath," I repeated. "Yes, having nothing, I have lost all I have, which," I continued, "is, of course, nothing. But I am encroaching on Brook Farm—and the Koran——"

"And on the patience of your friends," said Ysonde; "don't try to be epigrammatic, Bobby."

There was a glass of water standing on a table to my right. I did not see it, my right eye being sightless, and I knocked it over. I was confused and startled at this—it brought back to me my misfortune so cruelly that I apologised more than was necessary, and received a puzzled stare from Ysonde. I noted it and chafed helplessly. Lynda Sutherland came out on the porch, and I rose and brought her a chair.

"The moonlight reminds me of Venice," said Lynda, turning her lovely face to the moon.

We all agreed with her, although we knew it was nonsense, for we all had lived in Venice. If she had said it reminded her of peach ice cream, we would have agreed. She was too beautiful for one to analyse what she said—she was too beautiful to analyse it herself. I remembered with a shock that the late lamented had once referred to his wife's being "d——d ornamental," and I was glad the panther had clawed his besotted soul from his body. But Sutherland had never said a truer thing in his life; drunkard that he was, he always spoke the truth.

"Lynda," cooed Ysonde, "do you think that we might camp for a few days with Bobby and Mr. Blylock? They are going to the Black Water to-morrow, and Mr. Blylock asked us."

"We take two guides," added Blylock vaguely.

"We will only stay three days," said I.

"We will have a trout supper," suggested Blylock.

"And flapjacks for breakfast," said I.

"I should so like to go," pleaded Ysonde.

Blylock examined the moon, and I saw Lynda look at him.

"Is there any danger?" she asked.

I was discreetly silent; the question was not addressed to me.

"I think not," said Blylock, turning around. "I carry a rifle."

"Three cheers for Bunker Hill!" I said, "there is nothing to shoot——"

"Except—panthers," observed Blylock, dryly.

At this tactless remark I expected to hear Lynda refuse to go. She did not, although she looked at Blylock a little reproachfully. He, serenely unconscious, examined his seal ring in silence. Possibly Lynda did not believe that panthers ranged so near the inn, perhaps she was not ungrateful to the last one that had patted her late lamented into a better land.

"There are," said I truthfully, "a few panthers ranging between the Gilded Dome and Crested Hawk. Sometimes they get as far as Noon Peak and the White Lady, sometimes even as far as Lynx Peak, but I never heard of anything bigger than a lynx being seen near the Black Water."

"I have been in these forests every summer and autumn for twenty years," said Blylock, "and I never saw either panther or lynx; have you?" he ended, turning toward me. Then recollecting that I had witnessed the mauling of the late lamented, he turned rosy, and I was pleased to see that he was capable of experiencing two whole emotions in one evening.

I did not answer—it was not necessary, of course. I could show him the panther skin in my studio some day when I wanted to take a rise out of him. It measured nine feet from tip to tip—it might have measured more had the panther had time to nourish himself with Sutherland.

Now, Ysonde must have read what was passing in my mind, for she looked shocked and nestled closer to Lynda.

"What is a lynx?" demanded Lynda, shivering.

"There are two species found here," replied Blylock, glad to change the subject. "One, the big grey Canada lynx; the other, the short-tailed American lynx——"

"Otherwise, bob-cat, Lucivee, and wild-cat," I interposed. "They make a horrid noise in the woods, and are harmless."

"If you let them alone," added Blylock, conscientious to the end.

"Which we will," said Ysonde gaily. "We are going, are we not, Lynda?"

"No," said Lynda firmly.

But the next morning, when the first sunbeams scattered the mist which clung to copse and meadow and sent it rolling up the flanks of the Gilded Dome, Lynda said "Yes," and possibly her pretty mountain costume tipped the balance in Ysonde's favour, for Lynda looked like a *fin-de-siècle* Diana in that frock, and she knew it, bless her fair face!

The guides, Jimmy Ellis and Buck Hanson, were tightening straps and rolling blankets on the lawn outside.

"Buck," said I, "how many pounds do you take in?"

"Fifty, Sir," drawled Buck, wiping the sweat from his face with the back of his hand.

"And you, Jimmy?" I asked.

"About forty, Sir," replied Ellis seriously.

"I cal'late," added Buck, "thet the ladies will want extry blankets."

"They will," I replied; "the wind is hauling around to the north-west." Then I took a step nearer and dropped my voice.

"Any panthers seen lately, Jimmy?"

"I hain't seed none," replied Ellis.

"What was it killed the white heifer two weeks ago?"

"Waal," replied Jimmy, reflecting a little, "I cal'late it was a cat."

"It maught be a b'ar," said Buck; "I seed one daown to Drakes's clearin' last week come Sabbath."

"Sho!" drawled Ellis, returning to his blankets.

"I understand," said I, "that Ezra Field found a thirty-pound trap missing last week."

"Whar?" asked Hanson.

"Back of the gum-camp on Swift River," I replied.

Ellis looked cynical and Hanson laughed—the silent, confiding laughter of the honest.

"Ezry was scairt haf tu deth by a bob-cat, onct, into Swift River forks," said Ellis; "he sees things whar there hain't nawthin'."

"Do you think," said I, after a long pull at my pipe, "that panthers ever attack? I mean when you let their cubs alone."

"Hain't never seed no panther," replied Buck.

"You saw Mr. Sutherland when he was brought in three years ago?"

"Yes, Sir; you and Cy Fields toted him in.'

"Well, you saw the panther we brought in also, didn't you?"

"Yes, Sir, but that was a daid panther," replied Buck prosaically.

I laughed, and walked towards the piazza.

"All I want to know is whether you fellows have heard that these creatures are bothering honest people who mind their business," I said over my shoulder, and both the big guides laughed and answered, "No fear o' that, Sir!"

Half an hour later we were on the trail to the Black Water.

The morning was perfect, the air keen as September breezes on the moors, and the mottled sunlight spotted our broad trail, which twisted and curved through the tangled underbrush along the bank of a mountain stream.

Blylock and Ysonde were well ahead, the latter swinging a light, steelshod mountain stick; next came Lynda, beautiful and serene, approving the beauty of the forest in pleased little platitudes. I followed close behind, silent, spellbound by the splendour of the forest, charmed by the soft notes of the nesting thrushes and the softer babble of Lynda and the brook.

Broad, dewy leaves slapped our faces; filmy, floating spiders' meshes crossed our chins and cheeks, and tickled Ysonde's pretty nose.

"You may walk ahead," she said to Blylock, "and break the spiders' webs for me."

"With pleasure," said Blylock seriously, and I saw him take the lead, his single eyeglass gleaming in the sunshine.

"It is written," said I flippantly, "that the first shall be last and the last first—I believe that I should take the lead."

"Please do," said Ysonde coolly, "it is your proper place."

Now, Ysonde had never before said anything to me quite as sharp as that, although doubtless I had often invited it, having much of the ass in my composition.

"Do you want me to go?" I asked inanely.

"If you care to clear the path, I would not object," said Ysonde.

"For you and Lynda?" said I, feeling that I was speaking regardless of either sound or sense.

"And for Mr. Blylock," added Ysonde quietly.

"With pleasure," said I, vaguely wishing my tongue might stop wagging before I said something hopelessly foolish. "I shall clear the way for you—and Mr. Blylock."

I had said it. Even Lynda raised her lovely eyes to me in disapproval. As for Ysonde, her face wore that pained expression that I dreaded to see; I never had seen it but once before—in the glade—and I felt that my proper place was among the wits of a country store. A boor in the kitchen of the Rosebud Inn would have had more instinctive tact—unless he was jealous, that is the word! I was jealous—vulgarly jealous—of Blylock. Perhaps Ysonde read the shame in my face—perhaps she had divined my thoughts as she did when she chose, but she saw I was miserable—disgusted with myself, and she raised me to her own level with a smile so sweet and chivalrous that I felt there was manhood left in me yet.

"Bobby," she said, "you promised to show me how to blaze a trail. Have you forgotten?"

I dropped out of the path to the right, she to the left; Lynda passed us to join Blylock, who was waiting; the two big guides tramped by, their boots creaking on the trodden leaves. I drew the light hatchet from my belt, removed the leather blade-cover, and started on.

"This is all it is," I said, and struck a light shaving from the bark of a hemlock, cutting it at the base with the next stroke so that the bit of bark fell, leaving a white scar on the tree-trunk.

"Always on both sides," said I, repeating the stroke on the other side of the tree. "Will you try it, Ysonde?"

She took the hatchet in her small, gloved hand, and the chips flew along the trail until I begged her to spare the forest.

"But the trees don't die!" she exclaimed. "Oh, Bobby, you're joking—am I overdoing it?"

"A little," said I. "A blind man could follow this forest boulevard."

"You are blind," she said calmly.

"Blind!" I cried, with a start.

"To your own interests, Bobby. Aunt Lynda likes you, but she doesn't like to hear you speak flippantly. If you destroy her trust in you she will not let us walk together when we please."

We moved on in silence for awhile, until Ysonde, tired of blazing, handed me *the hatchet.*

"Yes," said I, "I am blind. I cannot lead you—on any trail."

"Nor I you," she said simply.

I did not reply, for who but I should know that through the fragrant forest, bathed in sun and dew, the blind led on the blind?

"You have formed a habit," said Ysonde, "of muttering to yourself. Are you afraid to have me know your thoughts?"

"Yes," said I, turning; "I am afraid."

She did not answer, but I saw her colour deepen, and I feared that I had spoken bitterly.

"I was thinking that I had forgotten my flask," I continued gaily.

"Mr. Blylock has your flask. You were not thinking of that," said Ysonde.

"Well," said I, "then tell me of what I was thinking. You know you can read my thoughts—when you take the trouble," I added prudently.

"Bobby," said Ysonde, "I would take more trouble for your sake than you dream of."

I stopped short in the trail and faced her; but she passed me impatiently. I saw her bite her lip, as she always did when annoyed.

The chestnut, oak, and dappled beech-woods were giving place to pines and hemlocks as we wheeled from the Gilded Dome trail into the narrower trail that leads over the long divide to the Black Water. Along the rushing stream elder and hazel waved, silver birches gleamed, deep set in tangled depths, and poplars rose along the water's edge, quivering, as the breezes freshened, every glistening leaf a-tremble.

Under foot brown pine-needles spread a polished matting over the forest mould, for we had entered the pine-belt, and the long trail had just begun.

The breeze in the pines!—it will always make me think of Ysonde. Wild, wind-swept harmonies, swelling from the windy ridge, the whisper and sigh and rush of water, the grey ledges, the deep sweep of precipices where lonely rivers glimmer lost in the sea of trees—these I remember as I think of Ysonde; these and more too—the dome of green, the fragments of sky between mixed branches, the silence, broken by a single bird-note.

* * * *

The trail crossed a sunny glade, mossy and moist, bordered by black-birch thickets and carpeted with wintergreen. Ysonde leaned upon her steel-shod staff and looked at her own reflection in the

placid spring pool shining among the ferns.

"I am very much tanned," she said.

"Are you thirsty?" I asked.

"There is a little freckle beside my nose," observed Ysonde.

"It is becoming," I said truthfully.

"Yes, I am thirsty," said Ysonde. "What do you know about freckles?"

I handed her a cup of water. She drank a little, looked over the rim of the cup reflectively; drank a little more, sighed, smiled, and poured what was left of the water upon the moss.

"A libation to the gods," she explained.

"To which?" I asked.

"Ah!" she said, "I had not thought of that. Well, then, to—to——"

I looked at her, and she tossed the cup to me, saying: "I shall not tell you; I am getting into the habit of telling you everything."

"But—but the gentleman's name?" I urged.

"No! no! Goodness me, may I not have a secret all my own?"

"Very well," said I, "you pour out libations to a gentleman god and I shall even up matters. Here's to the lady!"

"Minerva, of course; you are so wise," suggested Ysonde.

"It's neither to Minerva nor to the owl," said I; "it's to the Lady Aphrodite."

"Pooh!" said Ysonde, "you are not clever; Hermes might——"

"Might what?"

"Be careful, Bobby; your sleeve is getting wet."

"Might what?"

"Now, how should I know?" exclaimed Ysonde. "Mercy! I'm not a little Greek maiden."

I strapped the cup to my belt, tightened the buckle of my rod-case, lighted my pipe, and sat down on a log.

"Well, Master Bobby," said Ysonde, in that bantering voice which she used when perfectly happy.

"Well, Mistress Ysonde?" said I.

"Are you going to lose the others?"

I pointed to the foot of the long slope, where, among the tree-trunks, something blue fluttered.

"It's Lynda's veil," said Ysonde; "and there is Mr. Blylock also. They are sitting down."

"True," said I; "let us rest also; we have been hours on the trail. Here is a dry spot on this log."

Ysonde sat down. Now, whenever Ysonde seated herself there was something in the pose of her figure that made me think of courts and kings and coronations. The little ceremony of seating herself ended, I resumed my seat also, feeling it a privilege accorded only to the very great. I told her this, and she pretended to agree with me.

"You must be something at Court," she said; "you cannot be an earl, for earls are blonde and slender; you cannot be a count, for counts are dark and dapper; nor a duke, for dukes are big and always red in the face; you might be a baron—no, they are fierce and merciless——"

"So am I."

"No, you're not; you can't be a marquis either, for they are plausible and treacherous."

"Then I'll be a Maaster of 'Ounds," I insisted; "let the title go by the board."

She agreed, and I was installed Master of Staghounds to her petite Majesty—this position permitting me to sit occasionally in her presence.

"I am thirsty again," said Ysonde. I brought her a cup of ice-cold water, into which I dropped a dozen wild strawberries. She touched a berry with the tip of her pink tongue, which was bad manners, and I told her so.

"What do you know about Queen's etiquette?" she said disdainfully, and, finding the berries ripe, she ate three and smiled at me.

A thrush came fearlessly to her very feet and drank from the spring, a mottled wood-toad made futile efforts to clamber up the log into her lap, and two red lizards peeped at her from a cleft in the boulder beside us.

"It's queer," said I, watching the scrambling toad, "how you seem to fascinate all wild creatures. Shall I poke the toad away?"

"No, I am not afraid. I am very glad they all come to me."

"You were possibly a dryad once," I hazarded.

"Possibly. And you?"

"Probably the oak-tree that sheltered you."

"Sheltered me?"

There is something in the note of a very young bird that I have noticed in Ysonde's voice, but now, as she laughed—oh, such soft, sweet laughter—it seemed to me as though the bird had grown, and its note trembled with purer, truer melody.

"Sheltered me? I imagine it!" she said, with a wonderful sweetness in her eyes. "Hark! Mr. Blylock is calling!"

She rose with capricious grace, as I

answered Blylock in a view-halloo which awoke the echoes among the cliffs above us.

When we came up to them Lynda linked her arm in Ysonde's, and Blylock and I pushed ahead after the plodding guides.

Blylock and I discussed trout-flies and casts and philosophy, with an occasional question to the guides, and as we moved I could hear the light laughter of Lynda and the clear voice of Ysonde singing old songs that were made in France when hawks' bells tinkled in the castle courts and tasselled palfreys pawed the drawbridge.

It was noon when we entered the Scaur Valley, and luncheon was grateful, but before the leading guide entered the spotted trail which swings to the west above the third spur of Crested Hawk, the sun had dropped into the notch between Mount Eternity and the White Lady, and the Alpen glow crimsoned every peak as we threw down our packs and looked out across the Black Water. "Here," said I, "our journey ends. Princess Ysonde"—I took her gloved hand—"be seated, for below you lies the Black Water—yours by right of conquest."

"I cal'late 't'l be right cold to-night, Ma'am," said Buck Hanson.

"Yes," said Ysonde listlessly.

CHAPTER V.

Night fell over the Black Water before the shelter was raised, but the great camp-fire lighted up the cleared space among the trees, and I saw Ellis staggering in under loads of freshly stripped bark for our roof. Buck Hanson finished thatching the exposed ends with hemlock and spruce. The partition, a broad sheet of heavy bark, separated the "lean-to" into two sections, one for Lynda and Ysonde, the other for Blylock, myself, and the guides.

I had roamed about the underbush lopping off balsam twigs for our bedding. which Blylock brought in and spread over the pine-needle floor.

When Ellis finished roofing the hut with his thick rolls of bark I sent him to the spring below with the camp-kettle, and, picking up an axe, called to Buck to follow.

"I should very much like," said Blylock solemnly, "to chop a tree into sections adequate for the camp-fire."

"Take the axe and my blessing," said I. "I hate to chop."

"It's very good of you," said Blylock, following Buck into the forest, where our firelight glimmered red on rugged trunks towering into the blackness above.

Ysonde came creeping out of her compartment, her eyes and cheeks brilliant in the fire's glare.

"Lynda is lying down," she said; "isn't supper nearly ready? How delicious our bed of balsam smells! What are you doing with your trout-rod?"

I knotted the nine-foot leader to the line, slipped on an orange miller for a dropper, tied a big coachman three feet above it, and picked up my landing-net.

"What is home without a dinner?" I asked, "and what is dinner without a trout? Come down to that rock which hangs over the Black Water, and you shall see your future dinner leaping in the moonlight."

"Bobby the poet," said Ysonde, steadying herself by my arm in the dark descent to the lake. "Poet Bobby, there is no moon on the Black Water."

"Look," said I, "pointing to a pale light in the sky above the White Lady, "the moon will come up over that peak in ten minutes. Give me your hand, it's very dark."

Clinging closely to my arm, she moved through the undergrowth, until we felt the firm flat rock under our feet. The rock ran straight out into the water at right angles from the shore, like a pier.

"Be careful—oh, be careful," she urged, "you almost walked off into the water there where the shadows lie so black."

"Then hold me," said I diplomatically, and I felt her warm hands close tightly on my left hand. The moon peeped over the shoulder of the White Lady, as I made my first cast into the darkness ahead, and I saw my leader strike the water, now placidly rocking like a lake of molten silver.

"Oh-h!" cried Ysonde softly; "oh, the wondrous beauty of it all!"

In the silence I heard the thwack of an axe from the woods above, and Blylock's voice quite plainly. The water lapped the edges of the rock below us, catching thin gleams from the shining sheet beyond, and my silk line whistled and whimpered like a keen wind lashing the sea.

Then a wonderful thing occurred. Out of the depths of the burnished water a slim shape shot, showering the black night with spray. Splash! A million little wavelets hurried away into the darkness, crowding, sparkling, dancing in widening circles, while the harsh whirr of the reel rang in my ears, and the silk line melted

away like a thread of smoke. The rod staggered in my hand.

"Ysonde, there are two on now!" I whispered.

"Give me the rod," she said excitedly. I handed it to her, and for a moment she felt the splendid strain. Then the fish gave a deep surge to the west, and she gasped and pushed the rod into my hands.

"Living wild things struggling for life," she sighed. "Oh, hurry, Bobby—it pains me so!" and she pressed both hands to her breast.

For a second the joy of the battle left me. I had an impulse to fling the rod into the Black Water; but I am a hunter by instinct.

Deeper and deeper surged the fish, and the rod swayed and bent until the tip brushed my knuckles.

"Oh, kill the creatures," murmured Ysonde, "it's all so fierce and cruel. I never thought you were like that!"

"I am," I muttered, checking a savage sweep toward the north. "Quick, Ysonde—pass me my net."

She did so, and I crawled down to the water's edge, shortening my line at every step. It was soon over. I washed my hands in the Black Water and flung the fish back into the landing-net.

"Now," said I, tossing rod and net over my shoulder, "we will go to dinner. Lean on my shoulder. How brutal you must think me, Ysonde!"

"Yes," said Ysonde.

She passed me—perhaps it was the moonlight that whitened her cheeks—and I saw her enter the circle of red firelight as Lynda came forward to meet her.

"Hello, Ellis!" I called.

"Hallo, Sir!" came back from the spring among the rocks below, and Jimmy Ellis appeared, carrying a chunk of pork.

"Two," I said turning the trout out of the landing-net.

"Good fish, Sir," drawled Ellis. "Mor 'n 'nuff for dinner, I suspicion."

"Split them," said I; "broil both as only you can broil them. Spring all right?"

"Sweet and full. Dinner is ready above."

Blylock came down with a blazing pine-knot to inspect the fish, and I heard him rigging his rod ten minutes later as I walked into camp and sat down, glowing from a dip in the tin bucket below.

Lynda and Ysonde were nibbling away at broiled trout, hot toast, and potted pheasant.

"Dear me," said Lynda, "I really must not eat like this. I have had three cups of bouillon to begin with. Ysonde says you are the cleverest angler in the world."

"This, of course," said Ysonde, "may be an exaggeration, for I have seen very few anglers."

"Oh, you're not exaggerating one bit," I assured her. "Is there any toast over there?"

Lynda deigned to serve me with hot bouillon, and Ysonde tossed a slice of toast to me, scandalising the former aristocrat.

"You little savage," said Lynda reproachfully.

"Any trout left?" I asked. "Where is Mr. Blylock?"

"Here's the trout," smiled Ysonde, serving me a bit of the crisp, pink fish. "Mr. Blylock said 'Ha!' several times when he saw your two trout and went down to the rock flourishing his rod very recklessly."

"Mr. Blylock never flourishes anything," observed Lynda.

"No—he waved it, as Merlin might have waved——"

"Why, Ysonde!" said Lynda warmly. I was discreet enough to finish my toast in silence. I was very happy.

"Now, Sir Fisherman," said Ysonde, "a cup of this white wine with your trout? What! a whole bottle! Oh, Lynda, look at him!"

"I see him," said Lynda sleepily. "I wonder what time it is?"

Buck and Jimmy, having finished their dinner, which included a trout between them and a gallon or so of coffee, piled half-a-dozen logs on the fire, backed them with half a tree-trunk, said good-night very politely, and ambled away with the dishes and a pail of boiling water. Ten minutes later Blylock came in with three fair-sized fish, which Lynda admired and I encored, and then Lynda and Ysonde rose with deep reverences, and mockingly prayed to be allowed to retire.

Buck and Jimmy were already sound asleep.

"If they snore," said I, "there will be murder done on Black Water shore."

Blylock lighted a cigar and I my pipe.

"I never sleep well in camp the first night," said I.

"No?" said Blylock politely.

"No, you old jay," said I, for I was becoming very fond of Blylock. That broke the back of Beacon Street for the moment, and Blylock blossomed out as a storyteller without equal. I laughed till it hurt me, softly, of course; and still Blylock, imperturbable, bland, told story after story,

until I marvelled, between my spasms of laughter, at the make-up of this Bostonian. At last he went to bed, mildly suggesting that I follow his example, which I did after I finished my pipe, although I knew I should sleep but little.

About ten o'clock Buck Hanson snored. I leaned over Blylock, already fast asleep, and poked the wretched Buck until he stopped. Ten minutes later Ellis began a solo which I have never since heard equalled.

"Great heavens!" I muttered, and jabbed him viciously with my rod-butt, but Jimmy Ellis didn't wake, and before I knew it Buck Hanson, taking a mean advantage, chimed in with a snort that would have done credit to a rogue elephant. This was not all. I dread to record it, but I am trying to tell the truth in this story. I pray the lady to pardon me if I suggest that from the other side of the bark partition came a sound—delicate, discreet, but continuous; in short, a gentle—no! no! I can never bring myself to write it down. I am no brute, Madam—and, after all, only men snore.

A black fly got into my neck and bothered me; later a midge followed the example of his erring colleague. To slay them both was my intention, and in doing so I awoke Blylock, who sleepily protested. This was exasperating, and I told him so, but he was asleep again before I finished. Why on earth I should never be able to sleep more than an hour or so on my first night in the camp, I, who have camped in the forests for years, never can understand.

I endured the concerted snores of the whole camp as long as I could. Then I crawled to the fire outside, hauled two fresh logs into the blaze, swathed myself in my blankets, lighted a fresh pipe, and sat down with my feet to the heat and my back against a sapling.

Outside the wavering ring of firelight the blackness was so profound, so hopelessly impenetrable, that I wondered whether a storm was rolling up behind the Scaur. Trees, brush, rocks, and ledges—the whole huge forest, root and branch—seemed woven together into curtains of utter darkness, which wavered, advanced, and receded with the ever-dying, ever-leaping flames. There was no storm, for I saw stars on the strip of darkness above—little pale stars, timidly glimmering in the depths of a vast vault. The moon had long ago passed behind the Scaur—that sullen mass of menacing ledges, blackening the fathomless stretch of the Black Water. There were noises in the forest, stealthy steps and timid scratchings, now faint, as if across the rocking lake; now nearer; now so sudden and sharp that I involuntarily leaned forward, striving to pierce the outer circle of gloom beyond the fire ring. Once something brushed and rustled among the leaves behind me, and I saw a grey snake glide into the warm glow by my feet.

"Get out!" I whispered, with a gesture of annoyance.

The serpent slowly raised its head, flashed a forked tongue at me, swayed a moment, then noiselessly moved on into the night.

"Salut! O mon Roi!" said a low voice behind me, and Ysonde crept out of her fragrant bed of balsam and curled up in her blanket at my feet.

"Oh, dear," she sighed, "I am so sleepy, but I can't sleep! Why is it, Bobby? I haven't closed my eyes once."

"Then," said I, under my breath, "it was not you who——"

"Sh—h! Lynda might hear you——"

"Not probable—judging from symptoms."

"You're impertinent, Bobby—hark! do you hear? What was it?"

"Anything from a toad to a porcupine; the forest is always full of sounds. Are you warm, Ysonde?"

"Yes, and so sleepy that—ah! what was that?"

"Anything from a wood mouse to a weazel."

"I don't believe it!"

"A fawn, perhaps—I heard deer among the pitcher-plants, at the head of the Black Water, a few minutes ago."

"Gentle things," murmured Ysonde, "I wish they would come close to me; I love them—I love everything."

"And everything on earth and sea loves you, Ysonde."

Her lids were drooping and she smiled, half asleep.

"Bobby," she murmured, "I believe I could sleep here by you; you make me sleepy."

Her head dropped and rested on my blanket. After a moment—it may have been an hour—I whispered, bending above her: "Do you sleep, Ysonde?" And again: "Do you sleep?"

The stars flickered and died in the heavens, the flames sank lower, lower, and the great, black night crept into the camp, smothering the fading fire with pale shadows, vague and strange, moving, swaying, until my eyes closed and I slept.

I SPRANG AMONG THE EMBERS AND HURLED A GLOWING BRANCH STRAIGHT INTO THE CREATURE'S EYES.

Was it a second? Was it an hour? I sat bolt upright staring at the dying embers before me. A bit of charred log fell in with a soft crash, sending a jet of sparks into the air, where they faded and went out. Went out? There were two—two big green sparks, that had not faded with the others, and I, half asleep, watched them, vaguely curious. Ah! they are moving now; no, they are still again, close together.

The hair stirred on my head, my heart ceased, thumped once, stopped—it seemed hours—and leaped into my throat, almost stifling me with its throbbing. I was not dreaming, for I felt the sweat trickling in my eyebrows, and the roots of my hair were cold and damp.

Ysonde moved in her slumber, frowned, and raised her hand.

A low snarl came from the shadows. Slowly the power of thinking returned to me, but my eye never left those two green sparks, now blazing like lamps there in the darkness.

When would the thing spring? Would I have time to fling Ysonde behind me? Would it spring if I called to Blylock? Blylock had a rifle. Would it spring if I moved or if Ysonde moved again? Gently, scarcely stirring, I tried to free my knees, and the creature snarled twice.

"It's against all precedent in these woods," I thought, "for any of the cat tribe to dare attack a camp." A sudden anger took possession of me, a fury of impatience, and quick as thought I sprang among the embers and hurled a glowing branch straight into the creature's eyes. What happened after that I can scarcely tell. I know a heavy soft mass struck me senseless, but my ears at moments ring yet with that horrid scream, which seemed to split and tear the night asunder, wavering, quavering, long after I was hurled on my back and my eyes seemed stark open in oceans of blood.

CHAPTER VI.

When I came to my senses it was still dark; or so it seemed to me. After awhile I felt a hand shifting the bandage which pressed heavily over both eyes, and in a moment or two somebody raised me by the shoulders, somebody else by the knees, and I heard Blylock cock his rifle and say: "Give me that torch, Buck, and walk faster."

"Blylock," I gasped, "they're lugging me in as I lugged in Sutherland—mauled by a panther!" and I laughed miserably.

"Hello," said Blylock, in a low voice, "I thought you'd brace up! Are you bleeding much?"

"I don't know," I muttered. "What in hell's the matter?"

"Matter!" repeated Blylock; "the forest has gone mad. It's preposterous, but the woods are full of bob-cats, troops of 'em, and the skulking brutes have actually got the nerve to follow us."

"Can't I walk?" I groaned. "Where is Ysonde?"—for I was beginning to remember.

"Walk? Yes, if you want to bleed to death. The ladies are here between me and the guides who are toting you."

"Ysonde," I murmured, "pardon me for my profanity. I am dazed. Where are you?"

"Here, Bobby," whispered Ysonde; "close beside you. Don't talk, dear; you are very much hurt."

"Are you speaking to me, Ysonde?" I said, doubting my senses.

"To you, Bobby," she whispered close to my ear. "Didn't you know that I loved you? Ah! try to live, and you will know."

My strength was ebbing fast, but I think I muttered something that she understood, for the light touch of her hand was on my cheek, and I felt it tremble. Somebody gave me water. I was choking, and my burning lips shrank and cracked beneath the cool draught. I could hear Jimmy Ellis muttering to Buck Hanson, and Hanson's replies.

"Look out, Buck! Here's a rut. Mr. Blylock, can you dip your pine knot this side? So fashion. Steady, Buck!"

"Steady it is! Hold up his legs. Mr. Blylock, throw a stun by that windfall. There's a Lucivee sneakin' araound in behind."

Crack! spoke Blylock's rifle, and then I heard Buck's nasal drawl: "A stun is jest's good, Mr. Blylock. They're scairt haf tu deth. I suspicion it's the pork they're after."

"Throw that pork into the woods, Jimmy," said Blylock. "We'll be in before long. Good heavens! how dark it is. Lay him down and throw that pork away. There may be a panther among them.

"There be," drawled Buck. "I seen him."

"You did? Why didn't you say so? I can't waste cartridges on those infernal lynxes."

"I sez to you, 'Mr. Blylock,' sez I, 'throw stuns, it's jest as good,'" replied

Buck placidly, and I was lifted again, fore and aft.

"It's incredible," grumbled Blylock, "what's got into all these moth-eaten lynxes and mangy panthers. I've been twenty years in these woods and I never before saw even a tom-cat."

"I ain't seed nothing like this. There's three'r four bob-cats raound us now and I ain't never seed but one so close before. Jimmy was there that night. I jest disremember if it was abaout gummin' time——"

Crack! went Blylock's rifle, and I heard a whine from the thickets on the left.

"Thet's the panther—let him hev it again," said Ellis.

Again the rifle cracked.

"The darned cuss!" drawled Buck. "Shoot again, Mr. Blylock!"

"No need," said Ellis. "Listen! There he goes lopin' off. Hear him snarl!"

"Hit, I guess," said Buck, and we moved on.

Once I heard Buck complain that a particularly bold lynx kept trotting along the trail behind, "smellin' and sniffin' almighty close to my shins," he asserted, and there certainly was an awful yell when Blylock wheeled in his tracks and fired. I heard Ellis laughing, and Buck said, "Haow them Lucivees du screech!"

"Wors'n a screech-owl," added Ellis.

That is the last thing I remember until I woke in my bed in the Rosebud Inn.

The bandage was still on my eyes—I felt too weak to raise a finger—and the rest of my body seemed stiff and hard as wood. I heard somebody rocking in a rocking-chair, and I spoke.

"I am here," said Ysonde, but her voice seemed choked and unsteady.

"What time is it?" I asked incoherently.

"Half-past eleven," said Ysonde.

"I am hungry," said I, and that was my last effort until they brought me the bowl of beef broth with an egg in it, and I managed to swallow it all.

I heard the door close, and for a moment I thought I was alone, but presently the rocking-chair creaked, and I called again, "Ysonde."

"I am here."

"What is the matter with me?"

"You have been ill."

"How long?"

"Two weeks, Bobby. You will get well; the claws poisoned you. Try to sleep now."

"What claws?"

"The—the panther's—don't you remember?"

"No—yes, a little. Where are the lynxes? Where is Blylock?"

Ysonde laughed softly.

"Mr. Blylock has gone to Boston on important business. I will tell you all about it when you can get up. He's to be married."

"And Lynda?"

"Lynda is downstairs. Shall I call her?"

"No."

The next day I drank more broth, and two days later I sat up—it took me half an hour and some groans to do so.

"I think," said I, listening to the rocking-chair, "that it is high time I saw something. Lift my bandage, please, Ysonde."

"Only one side," she said, and lowered the cloth that concealed my right eye—the sightless one.

There was a silence — a wretched moment of suspense—and then Ysonde cried, "What—what is it—can't you see—can't you see me? Oh, Bobby!"

When I spoke I hardly knew what I said, but it was something about Keen's assuring me that nobody but an oculist could tell that I was blind in my right eye. I remember I felt very angry at Keen, and demanded to know how Ysonde could see that my right eye was sightless. I am glad I was spared the agony of her face—I would willingly have been spared the agony in her voice as she cried, "Did I do that!"

I tried to move, but her arms were about me—I tried to explain, but her warm mouth closed my lips. I only thought it was very pleasant to be blind.

The eyes of an oculist and the eyes of love see everything. Who says that love is blind?

Her tears fell on my cheeks. When she asked pardon I answered by asking pardon, and she—but after all, that is our own affair.

"And my left eye," said I, "is that gone too?"

"Almost well," said Ysonde; "it was a sympathetic shock or something. I was afraid the claws had struck it, but Dr. Keen——"

"Keen!"

"Yes; he's gone to Holderness now. Don't you remember his being here with Dr. Conroy, the surgeon?"

"No," said I; "I was too badly dazed; I have been mauled by a panther, then?"

"A little," said Ysonde, with gentle sarcasm.

After a moment I inquired about the present health of the panther, and was assured that he was probably flourishing his tail in excellent spirits somewhere among the Scaur crags.

"Then Blylock didn't hit him?"

"He hit something, for I heard it scream. Oh, my darling, what a horrible night! And you dying, as I believed, and the tangled brush and the flare of the torch and the firing!"

* * * *

"Are you thirsty? Your lips are burning," said Ysonde.

* * * *

I have a joke on Keen—James Keen, the great oculist, the wise, the infallible—and I trust he will swallow his medicine like a little man when he reads this. It happened in this way.

I was sitting under the trees by the tennis-court with Ysonde, watching the snow-birds fluttering in the meadow grass and listening to the robin who, boldly balanced on the tip of his spruce-tree, was doing his best. The blue-birds were teaching their young to navigate the air, twittering and tittering at the efforts of their youngsters—a truly frivolous family. The drab-coloured cow had also done her best, and the result was a miniature copy of herself, also an expert cud-chewer.

Billy — Ridiculous Billy, the white-whiskered and malicious—was spread in the low forks of an apple-tree, a splendid representation of a disreputable doormat.

Lynda sat at the bay window in the Rosebud Inn, embroidering something in white and gold. She also succeeded in doing her best in her own line, which was to look more beautiful every day. I saw Blylock's shadow behind her.

"When are they to be married, Ysonde?" I asked for the fiftieth time.

"On the 27th. Oh, Bobby, it's shocking to keep forgetting—and we are to be best man and bridesmaid, too!"

The sun dazzled my left eye, and I closed it for a second. Then a miraculous thing happened—an everlasting joke on Keen—for, although I had closed my sound eye, and by rights should have been blind as a bat, I was nothing of the kind.

"My right eye—Ysonde—I can see! Do you understand? — I can see!" I stammered.

Oh! it was glorious—glorious as the joyous wonder in Ysonde's eyes! It was a miracle! I don't care what Keen says about it having happened before or about it happening once in ten thousand cases, and I don't care a brass farthing for his subsequent observations concerning the optic nerve, and partial paralysis and retinas and things. It was and must remain one of God's miracles, and that is enough for Ysonde and for me.

"We will go to the glade and repaint my picture which you erased," said I.

She understood and forgave me, for I hardly knew what I was saying.

"Come," she said. Her eyes were wonderfully sweet, and bluer than the flowering flax around us. So, with her hand in mine, we walked up the scented path to the Rosebud Inn, Billy lumbering along behind us, twitching his hoary whiskers.